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## COLLECTED ESSAYS





COLLECTED  
ESSAYS PAPERS &c.  
*of*  
ROBERT BRIDGES

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THE MUSICAL SETTING OF POETRY
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PSALMS NOTED IN SPEECH RHYTHM  
*Preface and one Psalm*

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## PREFACE

THIS NUMBER of Robert Bridges' Collected Prose contains his Essays on Musical subjects.

I hav here temporarily abandon'd the use of the phonetic type in favour of the slight modification of ordinary spelling which he used in the *Testament of Beauty*. It was his own suggestion that this alternativ should be used in case the phonetics offer'd too great difficulties, and as Nos. XXIV, XXV, and XXVI contain musical illustrations, and details about psalnvnotation, *it* seem'd better not to confuse the reader with further symbols.

In addition to the acknowledgements, made in the separate prefaces, to Miss Eleanor Gregory, Dr. Fellowes and Mr. H. C. Colles, I wish to thank Dr. Percy Buck for friendly advice.

To Sir Hugh Allen I am particularly in' debted for the help and guidance he has given me in editing this volume.

All footnotes added by the editor are in square brackets: if they are quotations from other works by R. B., the source *is* given. The editor's own notes are printed in Roman.

M. M. Bridges



# XXI

## ON THE MUSICAL SETTING OF POETRY

*I*

B

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COMMEMORATION OF HENRY PURCELL,  
WITH OTHER POEMS AND A PREFACE  
ON THE MUSICAL SETTING OF POETRY*

*EDITOR'S NOTE*

MY thanks are due to Mr. H. C. Colles for his kindness in going thru' this essay and copying for me the passage, from Parry's *History of Music*, referr'd to by R. B. in Note I.

M. M. B.

# XXI

## ON THE MUSICAL SETTING OF POETRY

*published as Preface to the*

ODE FOR THE BICENTENARY OF H. PURCELL

[1896]

*T H E words of the ode as here given differ slightly from those which appear with Dr. Parry's Cantata, sung at the Leeds Festival and at the Vurcell commemoration in London last year.*

*since the poem was never perfected as a musical ode,—and I was not in every particular responsible for it,—I hav tryd to make it more presentable to readers, and in so doing hav disregarded somewhat its original intention. But it must still ask indulgence, because it still betrays  
\* the liberties and restrictions which seemd to me proper in an attempt to meet the requirements of modern music, it is a current idea that, by adopting a sort of declamatory treatment, it is possible to giv to almost any poem a satisfactory musical setting;<sup>1</sup> whence it would follow*

<sup>1</sup> For example, ther is a passage in Dr. Parry's recent work, **The Art of Music**, which wil illustrate what I mean. It is in the chapter on

## ON THE MUSICAL SETTING

*that a nonAiterary form is a needless extravagance. From this general condemnation I wish to defend my poem, or rather my judgement, for I do not intend to dis' cuss or defend my poem in detail, nor to try to explain what I hoped to accomplish when I engaged in the work; it is still further from my intention that anything which I shall say should be taken as applying to the music with which my ode was, far beyond its deserts, honour'd and beautify d. But I am concern d in combating the general proposition that modern music, by virtue of a declama' tory method, is able satisfactorily to interpret almost any kind of good poetry.*

*Such questions are generally left to the musician, and it should not be unwelcom to hear what may be said on the literary side. I shall therefor state what appear to me to be impediments in the way of this announced happy marriage of music and poetry, and enumerate some of the difficulties which, it seems to me, must especially beset the musician, who would attempt to interpret pure literal ture by musical declamation.*

*First, the repetitions in music and poetry are income patible. iho<sup>y</sup> some simple forms dependent on repetition*

***Modern Tendencies (see especially pp. 284-5). [See note at end of this Essay, p. 14.]***



## OF POETRY

*are common to both, yet the general laws are in the two arts contraries, in poetry repetition is avoided, in music it is look'd for. A musical phrase has its force and significance increased by repetition, and is often in danger of losing its significance unless it be repeated, whereas such a repetition in poetry is likely to endanger the whole effect of the original statement. And when reiterations that can be compared occur in both, then the second occurrence will in music be generally the strongest, but in poetry the weakest; and the intensity of the repetitions goes on decreasing in music, and increasing for some time in poetry, till both become intolerable.*

*Secondly, the difficulty which this difference occasions is much heightened by the method of declamatory exposition. Musical declamation must mean that the musical phrase is not chosen, as the earlier musicians might have chosen or invented it, chiefly for the sake of its own musical beauty, in correspondence with the mood<sup>1</sup> of*

<sup>1</sup> *I omit the idea, the musical suggestion of which is a feat of genius independent of style. The apprehension and exhibition of the mood is generally considered a simple matter, but really it affords a wide field for subtlety of interpretation. I have, for the sake of simplicity, assumed that in their choral music the older musicians altogether disregarded the speech inflexion of the phrase: but this is not quite true, and since, especially in some words as they usually set, the speech inflexion is often uncertain and*

## ON THE MUSICAL SETTING

*the words, and merely fitting the syllables; but that it is invented also to follow the verbal phrase in correspondence with some notion of rhetorical utterance, or natural inflection of speech enforcing the sense, and in so far with lesser regard to its own purely musical value, such a musical phrase wil therefor, in proportion to its success, be more closely associated with the words, and cannot well be repeated unless the words are repeated, which the declamation forbids.*

*Thirdly, when a declamatory musical movement is once started, the musician has very few means of bringing it to a conclusion. Ther is the method of repetition, which does not suit the ode,<sup>1</sup> and which on his own theory he is almost forbidden to use; and ther is the method of rising to a climax, which is perhaps the most usual device: but few poems can offer occasion for the recurrence of climax, and its employment would break up an ode*

*unimportant, or altogether a nonentity, and would very well correspond with almost any simple musical expression of the mood, this distinction between ancients and moderns cannot always be seen, or wil appear only as a difference of degree.*

<sup>1</sup> *Thru out these remarks I speak chiefly of the Ode. It is necessary in so wide a subject to aim at a definit mark, and while an ode happens to be in question, the Ode is also the example which is taken by Dr. Parry in the passage to which I hav referr'd the reader.*

## OF POETRY

*into artificial sections, which the poet must repudiate, in pure music the musician has invented many beautiful devices, but in choral music he has not yet shown, so far as I know, any power to match the poet's liberty in this respect, whose resources are as various as numerous, and are comparable to the freedom and caprices of a dancer, who can at any moment surprise by a gesture and be still*

*Fourthly, the very rhythms of poetry and choral music are different in kind. The rhythms and balances of verse are unban d, the rhythms of choral music are band. Even the universally recognized fitness of the interpretation of a common measurin verse by the corre' sponding common measur in music depends much more on the power and satisfying completeness of the musical form in itself than on any right relation which obtains between words and music under these conditions, "where the poetry has a more elaborated rhythm ther are two extremes, between which the musicians manner of seU ting must lie. One extreme, the musical, is that he should disregard the poetic rhythm for the sake of new musical ideas, which must of course add beauty and not do violence to the words: the other is that he should follow the elaborat poetic rhythm as nearly as possible. The method of declamation takes this latter extreme; it*

## ON THE MUSICAL SETTING

*forbids musical independence, and prefers to identify itself with the poetic rhythm, which in good poetry represents an ideal cadence of speech: but this interpretation is really a convention and a make-believe, and at best only an ingenious translation; and tho it may often be desirable, and the occasion of true musical beauty, yet its exclusiv use is an abnegation of musical spontaneity for the sake of a secondary, mediate form, conspicuously dependent on something extraneous; it givs prominence to ingenuity rather than to pure aesthetic beauty, and must provoke criticism rather than unquestioning delight*

*fifthly, the most beautiful effects in poetry are obtained by suggestion. A certain disposition of ideas in words produces a whole result quite out of proportion to the parts: and if it is askt what music can do best, it is something in the same way of indefinit suggestion. Voetry is here the stronger, in that its suggestion is more definitely directed. Music is the stronger in the greater force of the emotion raised. It would seem therefor that music coud hav no more fit and congenial task than to heighten the emotion of some great poetic beauty, the direction of which is supply d by the words. But if it seeks to do this by a method of declamation, it commits*

## OF POETRY

*a double mistake, first it tries to enforce the poetic means, which it may be assumed are already on full strain, and in exact balance, and wil not bear the least disturbance; and secondly it renounces its own highest power of stirring emotion, because thatt resides in pure musical beauty, and is dependent on its mysterious quality; for one may say that its power is in proportion to its remoteness from common direct understanding, and that just in so far as its sounds are understood to mean something definit, they lose their highest emotional power. It would follow from this that the best musical treat' ment of passages of great poetic beauty is not to declaim them, but, as it wer, to woo them and court them and caress them, and deck them with fresh musical beauties; approaching them tenderly now on one side, now on another, and to keep a delicat reserve which shall leave their proper unity unmolested.*

*Sixthly, if this is true of the highest poetic beauty, how wil the declamatory method fare when it has to deal with the commonplaces and bare or even ugly words which are the weaknesses and unkindnesses of language? Just when the poet must deplore that his material is not more musical, it cannot be the musicians triumph to insist on the defect. The ordinary monosyllabic exclamations*

## ON THE MUSICAL SETTING

*are a sufficient example; there is absolutely no declamatory rendering of these, which is at all worthy of the emotion which they must often be employed to convey, what can be made of them by a purely musical treatment is seen in the long-drawn melodious sighs with which Carissimi or Vurcell interpreted the ohs and Ahs.*

*Seventhly, this leads to the more general remark that the inflexions of all speech are much more limited in character, number and scope than those of the trained singing voice, whence it comes that the imitations of speech in declamatory music have a tendency to fall into a comparatively small number of forms, which, even when most skilfully disguised, are easily recognized by an attentive ear, and soon weary with their sameness. The basis of declamatory music is in fact no broader than that of the old recitativo secco, and it would seem unreasonable to hope that any ingenuity in the superstructure can long disguise this, or save itself ultimately from the same condemnation.*

*Eighthly, in consideration of the commonest difficulties which arise in setting to music words which have not been specially contrived for it, it appears that, compared with a more purely musical way, the declamatory method is absolutely at a disadvantage, it can do nothing with*

## OF POETRY

*parentheses or dependent clauses. The weak polysyllables, which have fit place in the diction and rhythm of verse, may be helped out by convention or by pure musical distraction, but declamation can only make them ugly. And as those for their weakness of sound, so other words unable for their sense to bear the stress of singing,—such as metaphorical words of slight meaning, which in poetry contribute but a part of themselves to the main idea,—these declamation would make ridiculous. Nor on the other hand, with the words and phrases which are generally held most suitable for music, is the declamatory method any richer or happier: these are the well-sounding words of broad meaning, and their common collocations; which require afresh imagination to revivify them. But the musician was always at his ease with these words, because his music was free to adorn them with any quantity of enrichment; and this commanded the attention the more completely when the words required none. Now if they are to be declaim'd, they must return to their old prosaic nakedness; and since the attention is to be calld to them, they will be even worse off than ever.*

*The above remarks are sufficient for my purpose: but so many negations may provoke the reader to look for some*

## ON THE MUSICAL SETTING

*positiv indication of the writer's opinion as to what sort of words are best suited for music, and what sort of setting they should have. This question is far too wide to be treated summarily, and if it has not been given to me to assist in solving it practically, I cannot venture to meddle with it further. I had hoped, as a matter of fact, to contrive something; but it seems to me that the musician's difficulty in advancing towards a solution is much increased by the necessity of pleasing large audiences, it is certain that the final appeal is not to the first hearing of any large audience in this country, what sort of music is really in request may be judged from the repertoires of our military bands, and the programmes of the Royal concerts. Even the highest class concerts I have seen interlarded with unworthy items, which were rapturously received by the fashionable hearers who did not recognize the trap.*

*The man that hath no music in himself  
is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.*

*and these were the stratagems to obtain his spoils.*

*it is possible enough that an audience may enjoy having commonplaces vociferated at them with orchestral accompaniment: but this is nothing. To the musician the poet*



## OF POETRY

*wil say that he is surprised to find a term, which is considered a reproach in poetry, esteemed as the description of the best means of its interpretation. To call a poem declamatory or rhetorical is to condemn it: and music is naturally less rhetorical than speech, so that in a declamatory interpretation of poetry music would seem to abnegate its own excellence for the sake of a quality foreign to itself and repudiated by the art which it is seeking to heighten.*

*He wil not be satisfied by the assurance that the method wil serve to introduce and explain poetry to some people who are generally indifferent to it: it wil seem to him that the musician is labouring to introduce into pure vocal music the old dramatic crux, that awkwardness from which it has, in its best forms, been beautifully free. Because in the musical drama that must be sung which should be spoken, why try to make that seem to be spoken which should be sung?*

## ON THE MUSICAL SETTING

[Extract from *The Art of Music*, pp. 284 5,  
by C. Hubert H. Parry

*This recognition of the personal nature of the singers in a chorus was prefigured very strongly in Bach's choral works, and also frequently in Handel's; but the development of orchestral music and of the resources of general dramatic effect have so enhanced the opportunities of composers that the chorus tends more and more to be the centre of interest in such works—and as choral singing is the department of music in which the largest number of people can take an active share, it is all of a piece with the interlacing of the endless phases of cause and effect which conduce towards important results, that the development of the methods of art which make chorus singing interesting in detail, and identify those who sing in them as human beings, should coincide with the great growth of democratic energy which marks the present age. And in such respects the forms of secular choral music, such as odes and cantatas, which are cast on the same general lines as oratorios, and are controlled by absolutely the same conditions of presentation, tend to become even more important and comprehensive than oratorio itself. There is nothing more ideally suited to*

## OF POETRY

*the inward nature of music than the presentation, in the closest and most characteristic terms, of great, reflective and dramatic poems and odes by genuine poets; and for such purposes the chorus is ideally suited. The declamatory method of treating the voices which is growing up and increasing, makes every member of the chorus take a share in the recital of the poem, and the practice of choral singing may yet become a happier means for the diffusion of real refinement of mind and character among large sections of the people than the world has hitherto ever had the fortune to contrive. A composer who has enough cultivation and refinement of mind to appreciate great poems, and commensurate mastery of the arts of choral music and instrumentation, may emphasize the beauties of a poem and bring out its meaning far more effectually than any amount of commentary and explanation. This is eminently a case which illustrates the value of the rich accumulation of resources of various kinds, and the wide facilities which they offer to modern composers; for till comparatively lately the range of design and the power of composers to wield varieties of means so as to make the form intelligible was so limited, that unless poems were constructed purposely to fit into conventional types of musical form, they could not be*

## THE MUSICAL SETTING OF POETRY

*effectively set. But since Beethoven has shown how various are the means of making a work of musical art coherent, systematic and intelligible, and other composers of the modern school have discovered how to adapt various means of expression to the requirements of musical form, there need be but few poems which are in a mood adapted for music that will not admit of an effectual treatment. And the advantages composers now enjoy are so copious that there is little excuse for their adopting the feeble resource which once was so universal, of repeating words and sentences without reference to their importance; for with increased range of means of expression and design poems can perfectly well be presented in conformity with the poet's intentions.]*

# XXII

## A PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME PRINCIPLES OF HYMN SINGING



### EDITOR'S NOTE

ROBERT BRIDGES was apparently asked to reprint this article in 1927 or 8, for he wrote to Noel Ponsby about that time:—'I do not myself wish it [the Principles of Hymn/singing] to be reissued, because I think the conditions are different now from what they were—and if I were to do anything of that kind now I should say different things.'

I was therefore doubtful about reprinting it. Sir Hugh Allen, whose advice I asked, suggested referring the matter to Dr. Fellowes; he kindly read the article, and answered:—

'I have looked through the Essay on Hymn/singing and . . . I would say certainly it should be reprinted with others of his Essays. Quite apart from the beautiful writing, it expresses a very definite statement of a subject, which, even if it were out of date—and it scarcely seems that, will always have a value as an expression of what was being felt at the period at which it was written/

After this reply I felt justified in including it among the rest of the essays on Music.

According to instructions left by R. B. 2 small corrections have been made on p. 21 and p. 22; and the second paragraph of Note 1 on p. 58, and Note 1 on p. 60 have been added. M. M. B.

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## XXII

### A PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME PRINCIPLES OF HYMN-SINGING

[1899]

ST. AUGUSTUS *description of the emotion which he felt on hearing the music in the Portian basilica at Milan in the year 386 has always seemd to me a good illustration of the relativity of musical expression; I mean how much more its ethical significance depends on the musical experience of the hearer, than on any special accomplishment or intrinsic development of the art Knowing of what kind thatt music must hav been and how few resources of expression it can hav had,—being rudimental inform, without suggestion of harmony, and in its performance unskilful, its probably nasal voice-production unmodifyd by any accompaniment,—one marvels at his description,*

*'what tears I shed at Thy hymns and canticles, how acutely was my soul stirrd by the voices and sweet music of Thy church! As those voices enter'd my ears, truth distilYd in my heart, and thence divine*

PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME  
*affection welXd up in a flood, in tears o'erflowing, and  
happy was I in those tears/<sup>1</sup>*

*St. Augustin appears to hav witnessed the beginnings  
of the great music of the Western church. It was the  
year of his baptism when, he tells us, singing was intro'  
duced at Milan to cheer the Catholics who had shut  
themselves up in the basilica with their bishop, to defend  
him from the imperial violence:*

*<sup>f</sup>It was then instituted that psalms and hymns  
should be sung, after the manner of the Eastern  
churches, lest the folk in the weariness of their grief  
should altogether lose heart: and from thatt day to  
this the custom has been retain d; many, nay, nearly  
all Thy flocks, in all regions of the world, following  
the example/<sup>2</sup>*

*The great emotional power that St. Augustin attri'  
buted to ecclesiastical music, and of what importance he  
thought it, may be seen in the tenth book of the Coiv  
fessions; he is there examining himself under the heads  
of the senses, and after the sense of smell, his chapter  
on the sense of hearing is as follows:—*

*'The lust of the ears entangled and enslaved me*

<sup>1</sup> Confess, ix. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ix. 7.

## PRINCIPLES OF HYMN'SINGING

*more firmly, but Thou hast loosen d and set me free. But even now I confess that I do yield a very little to the beauty of those sounds which are animated by Thy eloquence, when sung with a sweet and practised voice; not, indeed, so far that I am lured and cannot fly off at pleasure:<sup>1</sup> and yield tho' I do, yet these sweet sounds, join d with the divine words which are their life, cannot be admitted to my heart save to a place of some dignity, and I hesitate to giv them one as lofty as their claim.<sup>2</sup>*

*'For sometimes I seem to myself to be allowing them undue honour, when I feel that our minds are really moved to a warmer devotion and more ardent piety by the holy words themselves when they are so sung than when they are not so sung; and when I recognize that all the various moods of our spirit have their proper tones in speech and song, by which they are, through I know not what secret familiarity, excited. But the mere sensuous delight, to which it is not fitting to resign the mind to be enervated thereby, often deceives me, whenever (that is) the delight of*

<sup>1</sup> *This is perhaps rather a quality proper to the sensation.*

<sup>2</sup> *'Et vix eis praebeo congruentem [locum]/ which might only mean 'I cannot find the right place for them!'*

## PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME

*the senses does not so accompany the reason as to be cheerfully in submission thereto, but, having been admitted only for reasons sake, then even attempts to go before and to lead. Thus I sin without knowing, but afterwards I know.*

*<sup>e</sup>Then awhile, from too immoderate caution against this deception, I err on the side of too great severity; and sometimes go so far as to wish that all the melody of the sweet chants which are used in the Davidian psalter were utterly banisht from my ears, and from the ears of the church; and thatt way seems to me safer which I remember often to hav heard told of Athanasius, archbishop of Alexandria, that he would hav the lector of the psalm intone it with but a slight modulation of voice, so as to be more like one reading than one singing. And yet, when I remember my tears, which I shed at the hearing of the song of Thy church in the first days of my recover\*d faith, and that now I still feel the same emotion, and am moved not by the singing but by what is sung, when it is sung with a liquid voice and in the most fitting "modulation", then (i say) I acknowledge again the great utility of the institution.*

*<sup>f</sup>Thus I fluctuate between the peril of sensuous*

## PRINCIPLES OF HYMN-SINGING

*pleasur and the proof of wholesomness, and am more inclined (tho I would not offer an irrevocable judgement) to approve of the use of singing in the church, that, by the pleasur of the ear, weaker minds may rise to the emotion of piety. Yet when it happens to me to be more moved by the music than by the words that are sung I confess that I hav sinnd (poenaliter peccare), and it is then that I would rather not hear the singer!*<sup>1</sup>

*what would St Augustin hav said coud he hav heard Mozart's Requiem, or been present at some Roman Catholic cathedral where an eighteenth'century mass was perform d, a woman hired from the Opera'House whooping the Benedictus from the western gallery?*

*It is possible that such music would not hav had any ethical significance to him, bad or good. Augustin livd before what we reckon the very beginnings of modern music, with nothing to entice and delight his ears in the choir but the simplest ecclesiastical chant and hymn tune sung in unison. We are accustom d to an almost over'elaborated art, which, having won powers of expression in all directions, has so squander'd them that they are of*

<sup>1</sup> Confess, x. 33.

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*little value: and we may confidently say that the emotional power of our church music is not so great as that described by him 1,500 years ago. in fact if we feel at all out of sympathy with Augustins words, it is because he seems to over-estimate the danger of the emotion.*<sup>1</sup>

*There is something very strange and surprising in this state of things, this contrast between the primitive church with its few simple melodies that ravished the educated hearer, and our own full-blown institution with its hymn-book of some 600 tunes, which when it is opened fills the sensitive worshipper with dismay, so that there are persons who would rather not go inside a church than subject themselves to the trial.*

*what is the matter? what is it that is wrong with our hymnody? Even where there is not such rooted disgust as I have implied, there is a growing conviction that some reform is needed in words or music or both.*

*Assuming that the chief blame lies with the music (as, I think, might easily be proved), I propose to discuss the question of the music of our hymnody, and I shall proceed on the basis of St. Augustines principles: I am sure that they would be endorsed by any pious church-goer*

<sup>1</sup> St. Augustin does not allow that a vague emotion can be religious; it must be directed. Yew would agree to this.

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*who had consider<sup>d</sup> the subject, and they may be fairly formulated thus, The music must express the words or sense: it should not attract too much attention to itself: it should be dignify'd: and its reason and use is to heighten religious emotion.*

*One point calls for distinction: Augustin speaks of his emotion on hearing the hymns and canticles; he writes as if he had had no more thought of taking part in the music himself than we hav of joining in the anthem at a cathedral; and this might lead to a misunderstanding; for ther is no doubt that these hymns wer sung by the people: the story is that the very soldiers who wer sent to blockade the basilica, happening to be themselves catho' lies, join d their voices in the stanzas which St Ambrose had specially composed to disconcert the Arian enemy.*

*The ecstasy of listening to music, and the enthusiasm of a crowd who are all singing or shouting the same hymn or song are emotions of quite different natur and value. Now, neglecting the rare conditions under which these emotions may be combined, we shall, as we are speaking of hymns, be concern d chiefly with the latter kind, for all wil agree that hymns are thattpart of the church music in which it is most desirable that the congregation should join: and I believe that ther would be less difference in*

## PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME

*practice if it wer at all easy to obtain good congregational singing, or even anything that is worthy of the name, it seems perhaps a pity that natur should hav arranged that where the people are musical (as Augustin appears to hav been) they would rather listen, and where they are unmusical they would all rather sing.*

*Speaking therefor of congregational hymn singing, and conceding, as I think we must, that the essential use of such music is to heighten emotion, then, this emotional quality being the sine qua non (the music being of no use without it), it follows that it is the primary consideration. if we are to hav music at all, it must be such as wil raise or heighten emotion; and to define this we must ask, whose emotion? and what kind of emotion?*

*Let us take this latter question first, and inquire what emotions it is usual, proper, or possible to express by congregational singing of hymns. William Law, in his Serious Call, has an interesting, I may say amusing, chapter on the duty of all to sing, whether they hav any turn or inclination for it or no. All should sing, he says, even thoy they dislike doing so, and I think that what he affirms of privat devotion applies with greater force to public worship, it should satisfy the most ardent advocat*



PRINCIPLES OF HYMN/SINGING  
*of congregational singing, and it goes certainly to the root of the matter.*

*'It is so right and beneficial to devotion, has so much effect upon our hearts, that it may be insisted on as a common rule for all persons . . . for singing is as much the proper use of a psalm as devout supplication is the proper use of a form of prayer: and a psalm only read is very much like a prayer that is only looked over.. . . if you were to tell a person that has such a song, that he need not sing it, that it was sufficient to peruse it, he would wonder what you meant,... as if you were to tell him that he should only look at his food, to see whether it was good, but need not eat it \_\_\_\_*

*You will perhaps say that singing is a particular talent, that belongs only to particular people, and that you have neither voice nor ear for music.*

*'if you had said that singing is a general talent, and that people differ in that as they do in all other things, you had said something much truer.*

*'for how vastly people differ in the talent of thinking, which is not only common to all men, but seems to be the very essence of human nature: ...Yet no one desires to be excused from thought because he has not this talent in any fine degree.. •.*

## PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME

*'if a person were to forbear praying because he had an odd tone in his voice, he would hav as good an excuse as he that forbears from singing psalms because he has but little management of his voice. . . .*

*'These songs make a sense (of) delight in God; they awaken holy devotion: they teach how to ask: they kindle a holy flame. . . .*

*'singing is the natural effect of JOY in the heart... and it is also the natural means of raising EMOTIONS OF JOY in the mind: such JOY AND THANKFULNESS to God as is the highest perfection of a divine and holy life!*

*Now tho' I cannot feel the force of all Law's arguments, nor easily bring myself to believe that a person who dislikes singing, and has no ear for music, will readily find any comfortable assistance to his private devotion from making efforts to hit off the notes of the scale; yet I feel that Law's position is in the main sound, and that he has correctly specified the emotion most proper to that kind of uncultured singing which he describes: and tho congregational psalm-singing necessarily involves a greater musical capacity than that assumed in Law's extreme case, and may therefore have a wider field, yet we may begin by laying down that JOY,*

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PRAISE, and THANKSGIVING giv us the first main head of what is proper to be expressed, and we may extend this head by adding ADORATION and perhaps the involved emotions of AWE and PEACE and even the attitude of CONTEMPLATION.

\n such a subject as the classification of emotions as they may be expressed by music of one kind or another, it is plainly impossible to make any definite tabulation with which all would agree. The very names of the emotions will, to different minds, call up different associations of feeling, if any agreement could be arrived at, it would be at the expense of distinction; and all that I can expect is to have my distinctions understood, and in the main agreed with. And as I am most ready to grant to the reader his right to a different opinion on any detail, I beg of him the same toleration, and that he will rather try to follow my meaning than dwell on discrepancies which may be due to a fault of expression, or to a difference of meaning which he and I may attach to the same word.

With this apology in preamble, I will attempt to make some classification of emotions as they seem to me to be the possible basis for musical expression in congregational singing.

## PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME

*We hav already one class: I would add a second, to include all the hymns which exhibit the simple attitude of PRAYER.*

*A third class I would put under the head of FAITH. Examples of this class wil no doubt often cross with those of the first class, but they wil specify themselves as CELEBRATIONS of events of various COMMEMORATION, introducing a distinct form, namely NARRATION, which is a very proper and effectiv form for general praise.*

*Also this section wil include all the hymns of BROTHERHOOD and FELLOWSHIP, and of SPIRITUAL CONFLICT, with the correlativ invitatory and exhortatory songs, as modify d by what wil be said later.*

*Also, lastly, under this same head of "Faith, the DOCTRINAL hymns, and professions of creed whether sectarian or otherwise, which, if the definition be taken widely, make a large and popular class, well exemplify'd by the German hymns of the Reformation, or by those of our Wesleyan revival: strong with the united feeling of a small body, asserting itself in the face of opposition: concerning which we wil not speak further, except to recall the fact that this kind of enthusiasm was not*

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*absent from the causes which first introduced hymns into the Western church.*

*I believe that this is a pretty full list of all the attitudes of mind that can be properly expressed by congregational singing; and if we turn to other emotions which are made the subject of church hymns, we shall, I think, see that they are all of them liable to suffer damage by being entrusted to the rough handling of general vociferation.*

*such will be all hymns of DIVINE AFFECTION and YEARNING; all LAMENTS and CONSOLATIONS; all descriptions of spiritual conditions which imply personal experience and feeling, as ABASEMENT, HUMILIATION, CONTRITION, REPENTANCE, RESIGNATION, SELF DEVOTION, CONVICTION, and SATISFACTION.*

*Here I feel that many readers will be inclined to dissent from what I say, and as I shall not again recur to Law, I should like, in order to show my meaning, to call up his extreme example of an unmusical person singing in private devotion, if one pictures such a case as he supposes, is it not clear, whether one imagines oneself the actor or the unwilling auditor, that while such an exhibition of joy might perhaps pass, yet a similar incompetent attempt to express any of the last-named*

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*emotions would be only ridiculous? But between this single worshipper and the congregation the incompetence seems to me only a question of degree; while in the far more considerable respect of the sincerity of the feeling in the hearts of those expressing it, Law's singer has every advantage; indeed no objection on this score can be raised to him. But now suppose for a moment that he has not the emotion at heart corresponding to his attempt at song, and I think the differentiation of motifs for congregational singing will seem justifiable.*

*All these last-named emotions,—which I have taken from congregational hymn-books,—and I suppose there may be more of them,—call for delicacy of treatment. A Lamentation, for instance, which might seem at first sight as if it would gain force by volume, will, if it is realistic or clumsy, become unmanly, almost so as to be ridiculous, and certainly depressing to the spirit rather than purifying, in fact while many of the subjects require beautiful expression, they are also more properly used when offered as inspiring ideals; and to assume them to be of common attainment or experience is to degrade them from their supreme sanctity. But in thus ruling them unfit for general singing one must distinguish large miscellaneous congregations from small united bodies, in*

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*which a more intimat emotion may be natural: and as ther is no exact line of distinction here, so ther is no objection to the occasional and partial intrusion of some of these more intimat subjects into congregational hymns.*

*To this first question then, as to what emotions are fit to be expresst by congregational music, the answer appears to be that the more general the singing, the more general and simple should be the emotion; and that the universally fitting themes are those of simple praise, prayer, or faith: and we might inquire whether one fault of our modern hymn-books may not be their attempt to supply congregational music to unfitting themes.*

*To the next question, whose emotion is this congregational music to excite or heighten? the answer is plain: it is the average man, or one rather below the average, the uneducated, as St. Augustin says the weaker, mind; and thatt in England is, at least artistically, a narrow mind and a vulgar being. And it may of course be alleged that the music in our hymn-books which is intolerable to the more sensitiv minds was not put there for them, but would justify itself in its supposed fitness for the lower classes, 'what use,'<sup>3</sup> the pastor would say to one who, on the ground of tradition advocated the*

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*employment of the old plain'song and the Ambrosian  
melodies, 'what use to seek to attract such people as  
those in my cure with the ancient outlandish and stiff  
melodies that pleased folk a thousand years ago, and  
which I cannot pretend to like myself?' Or if his friend  
is a modern musician, who is urging him to hav nothing  
in his church but what would satisfy the highest artistic  
sense of the day, his answer is the same: he wil tell you  
that it would be casting pearls before swine; and that  
unless the music is 'tuney and 'catchy' the people wil  
not take to it And we cannot hastily dismiss these prac  
tical objections. The very Ambrosian music which is  
now so strange to modern ears was doubtless, when St.  
Ambrose introduced it, much akin to the secular music  
of the day, if it was not directly borrowed from it: and  
the history of hymn^music is a history of the adaptations  
of profane successes in the art to the uses of the church.  
Nor do I see that it can ever be otherwise, for the highest  
music demands a supernatural material; so that it would  
seem an equal folly for musicians to neglect the unique  
opportunity which religion offers them, and for religion  
to refuse the best productions of human art. And we  
must also remember that the art of the time, whether it  
be bad or good, has a much more living relation to the*



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*generation which is producing it, and exerts a more powerful influence upon it, than the art of any time that is past and gone. It is the same in all aspects of life: it is the hook of the day, the hero or statesman of the hour, the newest hope, the latest flash of scientific light, which attracts the people. And it must be, on the face of it, true that any artist who becomes widely popular must have hit off, 'I know not by what secret familiarity the exact fashion or caprice of the current taste of his own generation.*

*And this is so true that it must be admitted that it is not always the uneducated man only whose taste is hit off. in the obituary notices of such men as Gladstone and Tennyson the gossip will inform us, rightly or wrongly, that their favourite hymn<sup>1</sup> was, not one of the great masterpieces of the world,—which, alas, it is only too likely that in their long lives they never heard,—but some tune of the day: as if in the minds of men whose lives appealed strongly to their age there must be some thing delicately responsive to the exact ripple of the common taste and fashion of their generation.*

<sup>1</sup> I assume favourite hymn to mean a sung hymn. The interest of the record must lie in its being of a heightened emotion of the same kind as that described by St. Augustine in his own words, 'What tears I shed &c.

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*All this makes a strong case: and it would seem, since our hymn-music is to stir the emotions of the vulgar, that it must itself be both vulgar and modern; and that, in the interest of the weaker mind, we must renounce all ancient tradition and the maxims of art, in order to be in touch with the music-halls.*

*This is impossibly absurd; and unless there is some flaw in our argument, the fault must lie in the premisses; we have omitted some necessary qualification.*

*The qualification which we neglected is this, that the music must be dignified, and suitable to the meaning; and we should only have wasted words in ignoring what we knew all along, if we had not, by so doing, brought this qualification into its vital prominence, and at the same time exposed the position of those who neglect it, and the real reason of the mean condition of our church music.*

*The use of undignified music for sacred purposes may perhaps be justified in exceptional cases, which must be left to the judgement of those who consider all things lawful that they may save some. But if from the mission service this licence should creep into the special service, and then invade every act of public worship, it must be met with an edict of unscrupulous exclusion. Not that*

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*it can be truly described as thus having crept in in our time, it is always creeping, it has flourished in special habitats for four or five hundred years, and before then there is the history of Valestrinas great reform of like abuses, if in our time in England we differ in any respect for the worse, it is rather in the universal prevalence of a mild form of the degradation, which is perhaps more degrading than the occasional exceptional abuses of a more flagrant kind, which cannot hide their scandal but bring their own condemnation.*

*There is indeed no extreme from which this abuse has shrunk; perhaps the worst form of it is the setting of sacred hymns to popular airs, which are associated in the minds of the singers with secular, or even comic and amatory words: of which it is impossible to give examples, because the extreme instances are blasphemies unfit to be quoted; and it is only these which could convey an*

<sup>1</sup> It was not an uncommon practice on the Continent (say from 1540 to 1840), to print books of hymns to be sung to the current secular airs; and the names or first lines of these airs were set above the hymn's words as the musical direction. M. Douen, in his *Clement Marot et le psautier Huguenot*, vol. i, ch. 22, has given an account of some of these books; and any one who wishes to follow this branch of the subject may read his chapter. He does not notice the later Italian *Laude Spirituali* which might have supplied incredible monsters to his museum.

PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME  
*adequate idea of the licence.<sup>1</sup> The essence of the practice  
appears to be the production of a familiar excitement,  
with the intention of diverting it into a religious channel*

*But, even in the absence of secular or profane associa-  
tion, congregational singing, when provoked by undigni-  
fyd music, such as may be found in plenty in our modern  
hymn-books, may be maintain d without the presence of*

<sup>1</sup> Besides, the main fault of these books, from which we should hav to quote, is the association of the music, and this is really an accident, the question before us being the character of the music; so that we should require musical illustration, for tho' the common distinction between sacred and secular music is in the main just, yet the line cannot be drawn at the original intention, or historical origin of the music: the true differentiation lies in the character of the music, the associated sentiment being liable to change. If we wer to banish from our hymn-books all the tunes which we know to hav a secular origin, we should hav to part with some of the most sacred and solemn compositions; and where would the purist obtain any assurance that the tunes which he retain d had a better title? In the sixteenth century, when so many fine hymn-melodies wer written, a musician was working in the approved manner if he adapted a secular melody, or at least borrow'd a well-known opening phrase: and since the melodies of that time wer composed mainly in conjunct movement, such initial similarities wer unavoidable; for one may safely say that it very soon became impossible, under such restrictions, to invent a good opening phrase which had not been used before. The secular airs, too, of that time wer often as fit for sacred as profane use; and if I had to find a worthy melody for a good new hymn, I should seek more hopefully among them than in the sacred music of our own century.

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*religious feeling, out of mere high spirits; or as we say, 'in fun, and may easily give rise to mockery. I have witnessed examples enough in proof of this, but if I gave them it might be thought that I wished to amuse profane readers.<sup>1</sup> And though such extreme disasters may be exceptional outbursts, yet they are always but just beneath the surface, and are the inevitable outcome of the use of unworthy means. The cause of such a choice of means must be either an artistic incapacity to distinguish, or a want of faith in the power of religious emotion when unaided by profane adjuncts, what would St. Augustine have ruled here, or thought of the confusion of ideas, which, being satisfied with any expression, mistakes one emotion for another?*

*The practical question now arises, we know the need; how is it to be supplied? We require music which will reach the emotions of uneducated people, and in which they will delight to join, and in which it shall be*

<sup>1</sup> *I may give the following experience without offence. When I was an undergraduate there was a song from a comic opera by Offenbach so much in favour as to be de rigueur at festive meetings. Now there was at the same time a counterpart of this song popular at evensong in the churches: it was sung to 'Hark, hark, my soul'. I believe it is called L'encens des fleurs. They seemed to me both equally nauseating: it was certainly an accident that determined which should be sung at worship and which at wine.*

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*easy to join: and it must be dignify'd and not secular, if we condemn and reject the music which the professional church-musicians have supply'd with some popular success to meet the need, what is there to take its place? of what music is our hymn-book to be constructed, which shall be at once dignify'd, sacred, and popular?*

*The answer is very simple: it is this, Dignify'd Melody. Good melody is never out of fashion; and as it is by all confession the seal of high musical genius, so it is that form of music which is universally intelligible and in the best sense popular; and we have a rich legacy of it what we want is that our hymn-books should contain a collection of the best ecclesiastical and sacred hymn-melodies, and nothing but these, instead of having but a modicum of these, for the most part mawkish and ill-set, among a crowd of contributions of an altogether inferior kind; the whole collection being often such that if an ill-natur'd critic were to assert that the compilers had degraded and limited the old music in order to set off their own, it would be difficult to meet him with a logical refutation.*

*The shortest and most practical way of treating this subject will be to give some account of the sources from which the music of such a hymn-book as I propose would*

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*be drawn. I wil take these in their chronological order. First in order of time are the vlain'song melodies.*

*I hav already stated the ordinary objection to these tunes, that they are stiff and out of date. Now it may be likely enough that they wil never be so universally popular in our country as the fine melodies invented on the modern harmonic system, yet the idea that they are not popular in character, and that modern people wil not sing them, is a mistake; ther is plenty of evidence on this point Nor must we judge them by the income petent, and I confess somewhat revolting aspect in which they wer offer d to us by the Angb'gregorianists of thirty years ago, a presentment which has gon far to ruin their reputation; they are better understood now, and may be heard here and there sung as they should be. They are of great artistic merit and beauty; and instead of considering them a priori as uncongenial on the ground of antiquity, we should rather be thinking of them that they wer invented at a time when unison singing was cultivated in the highest perfection, so much so that a large number of these tunes are, on account of their elaborat and advanced rhythm, not only far above the most intelligent taste of the minds with which we hav to deal, but are also so difficult of execution that ther*

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*are few train d choirs in the country that could render them well To the simpler tunes however, these objections do not apply: in fact there are only two objections that can be urged against them, and both of these will be found on examination to be advantages.*

*The first objection is that they are not in the modern scale. Now as this objection is only felt by persons who have cramped their musical intelligence by an insufficient technical education, and cannot believe that music is music unless they are modulating in and out of some key by means of a sharp seventh;—and as the nature of the ecclesiastical modes is too long a subject, and too abstruse for a paper of this sort, even if we were competent to discuss it;—I shall therefore content myself by stating that the ecclesiastical modes have, for melodic purposes (which is all that we are considering), advantages over the modern scale, by which they are so surpassed in harmonic opportunities. Even such a thoroughgoing admirer of the modern system as Sir Hubert Parry writes on this subject, that it is now quite obvious that for melodic purposes such modes as the Doric and Phrygian were infinitely (sic) preferable to the Ionic', i.e. to our modern major keys.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> **The Art of Music**, by C. Hubert H. Parry. London, 1893, 1st edit., p. 48.



## PRINCIPLES OF HYMN SINGING

*And it wil be evident to every one how much music has of late years sought its charm in modal forms, under the guise of national character.*

*The second objection is their free rhythm. They are not written in band time, and cannot without injury be reduced to it.*

*As this question affects also other classes of hymns, I wil here say all that I hav to say, or hav space to say, about the rhythm of hymn'tunes; confining my remarks generally to the proper dignify V rhythms.*

*in all modern musical grammars it is stated that ther are virtually only two kinds of time. The time'beat goes either by twos or some multiple of two, or by threes or some multiple of three, and the accent recurs at regular intervals of time, and is markt by dividing off the music into bars of equal length. Nothing is more important for a beginner to learn, and yet from the point of view of rhythm nothing coud be more inadequate. Rhythm is infinite. These regular times are no doubt the most important fundamental entities of it, and may even lie undiscoverably at the root of all varieties of rhythm whatsoever, and further they may be the only possible or permissible rhythms for a modern composer to use, but yet the absolute dominion which they now enjoy over all*

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*music lies rather in their practical necessity and convenience (since it is only by attending to them that the elaboration of modern harmonic music is possible), than in the undesirability (in itself) or unmusical character of melody which ignores them. In the matter of hymn' melodies an unban d rhythm has very decided advantages over a band rhythm. In the former the melody has its own way, and dances at liberty with the voice and sense; in band time it has its accents squared out beforehand, and makes steadily for its predetermind beat, plumping down, as one may say, on the first note of every bar whether it wil or no. sing to any one a plain'song melody, Ad coenam Agni for instance, once or twice, and then Croft's 148th Psalm.<sup>1</sup> Croft wil be undeniably fine and impressiv, but he provokes a smile: his tune is like a diagram beside a flower.*

*Now in this matter of rhythm our hymn-book com' pilers, since the seventeenth century, hav done us all a vast injury. They hav reduced all hymns to the common times. Their procedure was, I suppose, dictated by some argument such as this: 'The people must hav what they can understand: they only understand the simple two*

<sup>1</sup> Andgiu Croft the advantage of his original rhythm, not the mit'State' ment in Hymns Ancient and Modern, No. 414.

## PRINCIPLES OF HYMN-SINGING

*and three time: ergo we must reduce all the tunes to these measures Or again, 'It wil be easier for them to hav all the tunes as much alike as possible: therefor let us make them all alike, and write them all in equal minims!*

*Both these ideas are absolutely wrong.<sup>1</sup> A hymnHune, which they hastily assume to be the commonest and lowest form of music, actually possesses liberties coveted by other music, it is a short melody, committed to memory, and frequently repeated: ther is no reason why*

<sup>1</sup> *It would be very damaging to my desire to convince, if I should seem to deny that the mistaken practice of these hymn-book compilers was based on the solid ground of secular common'sense. If anything is true of rhythm it is this, that the common mind likes common rhythms, such as the march or waltz, whereas elaboration of rhythm appeals to a trained mind or artistic faculty. I should say that the popularity of common rhythms is due to the shortness of human life, and that if men were to live to be 300 years old they would weary of the sort of music which Robert Browning describes so well—*

*'There's no keeping ones haunches still,  
There's no such pleasure in life.'*

*But hymn-melodies must not be put on that level. It is desirable to have in church something different from what goes on outside, and (as I say in the text) a hymnHune need not appeal to the lowest understanding on first hearing. The simple free rhythms, too, are perfectly natural; they were free-born.*

PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME  
*it should submit to any of the time'conveniences of  
orchestral music: ther is no reason why its rhythm  
should not be completely free; nor is ther any a. priori  
necessity why any one tune should be exactly alike  
another in rhythm, it wil be learn d by the ear (most  
often in childhood), be known and loved for its own sake,  
and blended in the heart with the words which interpret  
it: and this advantage was instinctivly felt by those of  
our early church composers who, already understanding  
something of the value of band music, yet deliberately  
avoided cramping the rhythms of their hymn'tunes by  
too great subservience to it.<sup>1</sup> One of the first duties  
therefor which we owe to hymn'melodies is the restora'  
tion of their free and original rhythms, keeping them as  
varyd as possible: the vlain'song melodies must be left  
unban d and be taught as free rhythms, and all other fine  
tunes which are worth using should be preservd in their  
original rhythm; because free rhythm is better, and its  
variety is good, and because the attraction of a hymn'  
melody lies in its individual character and expression,*

<sup>1</sup> I need only instance Orlando Gibbons' tune calYd 'Angels'. The original is a most ingenious combination of rhythms; and its masterly beauty could not be guess'd from the inane form into which it is degraded in Hymns Ancient and Modern, No. 8.

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*and not at all in its timeAikeness to other tunes. This last idea has been a chief cause in the degradation of our hymns.*

*I may conclude then that the best of these simpler vlain'song tunes are very fit for congregational use. They should be offer'd as pure melody in free rhythm and sung in unison: their accompaniment must not be en' trusted to a modern grammarian. It is well also to use most of them in their English form, the old Sarum Use as it is calYd; which happily preserves to us a national tradition, in the opinion of some experts older and more correct than any known on the continent; and if the differences in our English version are not due to purity of tradition, they wil hav another and almost greater interest, as venerable records of the genius of our national taste. These vlain'song tunes hav probably a long future before them; since, apart from their merit, they are indissolubly associated with the most ancient Latin hymns, some of which are the very best hymns of the church.*

*The next class of tunes<sup>1</sup> is thatt of the REFORMATION hymns, English, Erench, and German, dating from*

<sup>1</sup> *I omitj for want of space, mention of the late Vlam'song melodies {which would giv a good many excellent tunes}; and for want of knowledge the Italian tunes.*

PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME  
*about 1550 to some way on in the seventeenth century. The chief English group is known as sternhold and Hopkins' Psalter, which was mostly of eight line tunes. This book was virtually put together in Geneva about 1560, and antiquarians make much of it ifstripp'd, however, of its stolen plumes and later additions it is really an almost worthless affair, the true history of it being as follows. A Erench musician named Louis Bourgeois, whom Calvin brought with him to Geneva in 1541, turn'd out to be an extraordinary genius in melody; he remain d at Geneva about fifteen years, and in thatt time compiled a Vsalter of eighty five tunes, almost all of which are of great merit, and many of the very highest excellence. The splendour of his work, which was merely appreciated as useful at the time, was soon obscured, for immediatly on his leaving Geneva, the Erench Vsalter was completed by inferior hands, whose work, being mixt in with his, lower'd the average of the whole book enormously, and Bourgeois' work was never distinguish until, quite lately, the period of his office was investigated and compared with the succeeding edi' tions of his book. Now the English refugees compiled their sternhold and Hopkins' at Geneva, in imitation of the Erench, during the time of Bourgeois' residence, and*

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*took over a number of the Trench tunes; tho they mauled these most unmercifully to bring them down to the measur of their doggerel psalms, yet even after this barbarous treatment bourgeois' spoilt tunes wer still far better than what they made for themselves, and suffix dent not only to float their book into credit, but to kindle the confused enthusiasm of subsequent English antu quarians, whose blind leadership has had some half hearted following. But if these Trench tunes, and those which are pieced in imitation of Bourgeois, be abstracted from this English Psalter, then, with one or two except tions, ther wil remain hardly anything of value.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> *Comparing the English with the Trench Genevan "Psalter, I do not think my judgement is too severe on our own. It had a few fine tunes original to it; best of all the cxxxvii (degraded in Hymns Ancient and Modern). This is of such exceptional beauty that I believe it must hav been written by Bourgeois for Whittingham. Next perhaps is Ixxvii (calYd Sist in H. A. M. ), the original of which, in Day, 1566, is a fine tune, degraded already in Este, 1592, which version H. A. M. follows: it is said to hav come from Geneva. Besides these, xxv and xlv, which are the only other tunes from this source in H. A. M. , are very favourable examples, and I do not think that they wil rescue the book. Nor can I believe that these old English D. C. M. tunes wer ever much used. They are too much alike for many of them to hav been committed to memory, while all the editions which I happen to hav seen are full of misprints, and the fourAine tunes which drove them out wer early in the field, and increased rapidly.*

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*To leave the English tunes for a moment and continue the subject, we shall practically exhaust the French branch of this class by saying that our duty by them is to use a great number of Bourgeois' tunes, restoring their original form. They are masterpieces which have remained popular on the continent from the first; thoroughly congenial to our national taste, and the best that can be imagined for solemn congregational singing of the kind which we might expect in England. The difficulty is the same that beset the old original psalter-makers, i.e. to find words to suit their varied measures. But this must be done.<sup>1</sup> These tunes in dignity, solemnity, pathos, and melodic solidity leave nothing to desire.*

*The English eighteenth century tunes of Sternhold and Hopkins we may then, with one or two exceptions, dismiss to*

<sup>1</sup> *When one turns the pages of that most depressing of all books ever compiled by the groaning creature, Julian's hymn-dictionary, and sees the thousands of carefully tabulated English hymns, by far the greater number of them not only pitiable as efforts of human intelligence, but absolutely worthless as vocal material for melodic treatment, one wishes that all this effort had been directed to supply a real want. E.g. the two Wesleys between them wrote thirteen octavo volumes, of some 400 pages each, full of closely printed hymns. One must wish that Charles Wesley at least (who showed in a few instances how well he could do) had, instead of reeling off all this stuff, concentrated his efforts to produce only what should be worthy of his talents and useful to posterity.*



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*neglect; but among the jourAine 'common tunes which gradually ousted them, ther are about a dozen of high merit: these being popular still at the present day require no notice, except to insist that they should be well harmo' nized in the manner of their time, and generally hav the long initials and finals of all their lines observed. They are much finer than any one would guess from their usual dull presentment Their manner, as loved and praised by Burns, is excellent, and ther is no call to alter it.<sup>1</sup>*

*Contemporary with this group ther is a legacy of a dozen and more fine tunes composed by Tallis and Orlando Gibbons, the neglect or treatment of which is equally disgraceful to all concern d.*

*As for the German tunes of the Reformation, attempts to introduce the German church'chorales into anything like general use in England hav never, so far as I know, been successful, owing, I suppose, to a difference in the melodic sense of the two nations. But some few of them are really popular, and more would be if they wer pro' perly presented with suitable words; and it should not*

<sup>1</sup> *If old tunes are modernized out of a fine rhythm, a curious result would be likely to come about; viz. that modern tunes might be written in the old rhythm for the sake of novelty, while the old wer being sung in the more modern way for the sake of uniformity.*

## PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME

*be a difficult task to provide words even more suitable and kind than the original German, which seldom ob'serves an intelligent, dignify'd and consistent mood. These chorales should be sung very slow indeed, and wil admit of much accompaniment Bach's settings, when not too elaborat or of impossible compass in the parts, may be well used where the choir is numerically strong. He has made these chorales peculiarly his own, and, in accepting his interpretation of them, we are only acquiescing in a universal judgement, while we make an exception in favour of genius; for as a general rule (which wil of course apply to those chorales which we do not use in Bach's version), all the music of this Reformation period must be harmonized strictly in the vocal counterpoint which prevail'd at the end of the sixteenth century; since thatt is not only its proper musical interpretation, but it is also the ecclesiastical style par excellence, the field of which may reasonably be extended, but by no means contracted, it is suitable both for simple and elaborat settings, for hymns of praise or of the more intimat ideal emotions, and in a resonant building a choir of six voices can produce complete effects with it. The broad, sonorous swell of its harmonious intervals floods the air with peaceful power, very unlike the broken*

## PRINCIPLES OF HYMN SINGING

*sea of Bach's chromatics, which, to produce anything like an equal effect of sound, needs to be powerfully excited.*

*it is necessary to insist strongly on one caution, viz. that grammar is not style, and settings which avoid modernisms are not for that reason a fair presentation of the old manner. Nothing is less like a fine work of art than its incompetent imitation. And this practically exhausts, as far as I am aware, the material which this period provides.*

*The next class will be made up of our RESTORATION hymns, by Jeremy dark, Croft, and others who added to the succeeding editions of the metrical Psalms, if there are not many in this class, yet the few are good; and dark must be regarded as the inventor of the modern English hymn tune, regarded, that is, as a pure melody in the scale with harmonic interpretation of instrumental rather than true vocal suggestion. His tunes are pathetic, melodious, and of truly national and popular character, the best of them almost unaccountably free from the indefinable secular taint that such qualities are apt to introduce, and which the bad following of his example did very quickly introduce in the hands of less sensitive artists. They are suitable for evening services.*

## PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME

*After this time ther follow'd in England, in the wake of Uandel, a degradation of style which is now com'pletely discredited. Diatonic flow, with tediously ortho'dox modulation, overburden d with conventional graces, describe these innumerable and indistinguishable productions. And just as the old tunes wer related to the motets and madrigals, so are these to the vewanthems and glees of their time. These weak ditties, in the admired manner of Lord Mornington, wer typically perform 'd by the genteel pupils of the local musician, who, gathered round him beneath the laughing cherubs of the organ case, warbled by abundant candlelight to their respectful audience with a graceful execution that rivalYd the weekday performances of Celia's Arbour and the spotted Snakes. Good tunes may be written at any time, for style is independent of fashion; but ther are very few exceptions to the complete and unregretted disappearance of all the tunes of this date.*

*We hav then nothing left for us to do but to review the material which the revival oj music in the last fifty years has given us in the way of hymns.*

*This last group divides naturally into two main heads; first the restoration of old hymns of all kinds, with their plain, severer manner, in reaction against the*

## PRINCIPLES OF HYMN SINGING

*abused graces; and secondly the appearance of a vast quantity of new hymns.*

*Concerning the restoration of the old hymns, we can't not be too grateful to those who pointed the right way, and, according to their knowledge and the opportunities of the taste of their day, did the best that they could. But, as our remarks under the heads of plain song and Reformation hymns will show, this knowledge, taste, and opportunity were insufficient, and all their work requires to be done afresh.*

*We are therefore left to the examination of the modern hymns, in place of this somewhat invidious task, I propose to make a few remarks on the general question of the introduction of modern harmony into ecclesiastical music, with reference of course to hymns only. It cannot escape the attention of any one that the modern church music has for one chief differentiation the profuse employment of pathetic chords, the effect of which is often disastrous to the feelings.*

*Comparing a modern hymn tune in this style with some fine setting of an old tune in the diatonic ecclesiastical manner, one might attribute the superiority of the old music entirely to its harmonic system; but I think this would be wrong.*

PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME  
***K is a characteristic of all early art to be impersonal.<sup>1</sup>***  
***A' long as an art is growing, artists are engaged in***

<sup>1</sup> This fact is of course generally recognized. The explanation in the text is one which was elaborately illustrated by the Slade Professor at Oxford [Prof. H. E. Wooldridge], in his last course of lectures on painting.

And I see that my brevity has led me here into a seeming contradiction, which it will be well to explain. The statement in the text, that early art is impersonal, and later art personal cannot I think be controverted; and the application of it to Valestrina and Beethoven may I think carry conviction: but the idea that personality is introduced into art thru the exhaustion of the simpler means of expression, may seem to be contradicted by the admitted growth and development of musical means. This contradiction will I think disappear if it be remembered that in the text I am speaking only of vocal music. The great subsequent developments of music have been instrumental and orchestral. At the time of the perfection of vocal music orchestral music did not exist: it is a different art, and has its own history, with which we are not here concerned. Now, speaking only of vocal music, if any one will compare a fine Italian or English madrigal of the sixteenth century with a modern choral composition I think he must admit that the earlier music is of such a perfection (compared with first beginnings of music) that whatever modern means of expression are to be found in the newer work they will comparatively count for very little. Again if these newer 'means' be examined many of them will be found to be instrumental in character, and really foreign to the vocal art. And further that the introduction of these means has led to a kind of vocal writing which is inferior to that of the older work. Considerations of this kind lead me into a field where I have no authority whatever to speak; but I think that the introduction of instrumental effects into vocal music is so far a proof of the comparativ

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*rivalry to develop the new inventions in a scientific manner, and individual personality is not call'd out. with the exhaustion of the means in the attainment of perfection a new stage is reached, in which individual expression is prominent, and seems to take the place of the scientific impersonal interest which aimed at nothing but beauty: so that the chief distinction between early and late art is that the former is impersonal, the latter personal*

*Turning now to the subject of ecclesiastical music, and comparing thus Valestrina with Beethoven or Mozart, is it not at once apparent that Valestrina has this distinct advantage, namely, that he seems not to interfere at all with, or add anything to, the sacred words? His early musical art is impersonal, what the musicians call "pure music"; and if he is setting the phrases of the "Liturgy or Holy Scriptures, we are not aware of any adjunct; it seems rather as if the sacred words had suddenly become musical. Not so with Mozart or Beethoven; we may prefer their music, but it has interfered with the sacred words, it has, in fact, added a personality.*

*exhaustion of the proper simple means of the art, at the time when they were introduced, when vocal music seems to have been much in the condition in which Beethoven left orchestral music.*

## PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME

*It must of course be conceded that this gives a very strong if not logically an almost unassailable position to those who would confine sacred music to the ecclesiastical style. But it seems to me ridiculous to suppose that genius cannot use all good means with reserve and dignity; and if the modern church music wil not stand comparison in respect of dignity and solemnity with the old, the fault must rather lie in the manner in which the new means are used, than in the means themselves; nor would I myself concede that ther is noplac in church for music which is tinged with a human personality; I should be rather inclined to reckon the great musicians among the prophets, and to sympathize with any one who might prefer the personality of Beethoven (as revealed in his works) to that of a good many canonized seers, what is logical is that we should be careful as to what personality we admit, and see that the modern means are used with reserve*

*Now if we examine our modern hymn-tunes, do we*

<sup>1</sup> 'But let our Authors and Poets complain ever so much of the genius of our People; 'tis evident, we are not altogether so Barbarous or Gothick as they pretend. We are naturally no ill soil: and have musical parts which might be cultivated with great advantage, if these gentlemen would use the art of Masters in their composition.'—Chesterfield, i. 274 (Advice to an Author).



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*find any sign of that reserve of means which we should expect of genius, or any style which we could attribute to the personality of a genius? . . .*

*These new tunes are in fact, for the most part, the indistinguishable products of a school given over to certain mannerisms, and might be produced ad libitum, as indeed they are; just as were the tunes of the Lord Morington school before described: and tho<sup>y</sup> the composers and compilers of these modern tunes would be the first to deride the exploded fashion, their own fashion is more foolish, and promises to be as fugitiv.<sup>1</sup>*

*I have said very little in this essay on the words of hymns. I will venture to add one or two judgements here. First, that in the plain-song period, words and music seem pretty equal and well matched. Secondly, that in the Reformation period, and for some time onwards, the musicians did far better than the sacred poets, and have*

<sup>1</sup> *There is one point which I cannot pass over. It has become the practice in modern books to put marks of musical expression to the words, directing the congregation when to sing loud or soft. This implies a habit of congregational performance the description of which would make a companion picture to the organ gallery of 1830. It seems to me a practice of inconceivable degradation: one asks in trembling if it is to be extended to the Psalms. It is just as if the congregation were schoolchildren singing to please a musical inspector, and be a stupid one.*

## PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME

*left us a remainder of admirable music, for which it is our duty to find words. Thirdly, that the excuse which some musicians have offered for the sentimentality of their modern tunes, namely, that the words are so sentimental, is not without point as a criticism of modern hymn' words, but is of no value whatever as a defence of their practice. The interpretative power of music is exceedingly great, and can force almost any words (as far as their sentiment is concerned) into a good channel*

*And if music be introduced at all into public worship it must be most jealously and scrupulously guarded. It is a confusion of thought to suppose that because—as St. Augustin would tell us—it is not a vital matter to religion whether it employ music or not, therefore it can be of little consequence what sort of music is used: and the attitude of indifference towards it, which has seemed to me to be almost a point of correct ecclesiastical manners, must be the expression of a convinced despair, which, in the present state of things, need not surprise. Devout persons are naturally afraid of secular ideals, and shrink from the notion of art intruding into the sanctuary; and, especially if they have never learned music, they will share St. Augustin's jealousy of it; and it is the more difficult to remove their objections, when what they are*

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*innocently suffering in the name of art curdles the artist's blood with horror, and keeps him away from church. The artist too, to whom we might look for help, is the rara avis in terris, and, in regard to his sympathy with the clergy, would often be thought by them to deserve the rest of the hexameter; but it is really to his credit that he is loth to meddle with church music, its social vexations, its eye to the market, its truckling to vulgar taste and ready subservience to a dominant fashion, which can never (except under the rarest combination of circumstances) be good;—all this is more than enough to hold him off. where then is the appeal? Quis custodier*

*The unwillingness of the clergy<sup>1</sup> to know anything about music might be got over if the music could be set on a proper basis; and in the present lack of authority and avow'd principles, it would be well if such of our cathedral precentors and organists as hav the matter at heart would consult and work together with the purpos of instructing pastors and people by the exhibition of*

<sup>1</sup> It must be due to unwillingness that comparatively so few of our clergy can take their part in the service when it is musical. Village schoolmasters tell me that two hours a week is sufficient in a few months to bring all the children up to a standard of time and tune and reading at sight that would suffice a minor canon.

## PRACTICAL DISCOURSE ON SOME

*what is good. This is what we might expect of our religious musical foundations, which are justifying the standing condemnation of utilitarian economists so long as the stipendiaries are content indolently to follow the fortuitous traditions of the books that lie in the choir, supplemented by the penny'a'sheet music of the common shops, in the Universities, too, it should be impossible for an undergraduat not to gain acquaintance with good ecclesiastical music, and this is not ensured by an occasional rare performance of half a dozen old masterpieces which are preserved in heartless compliment to antiquity. It is to such bodies that we must fast look for help and guidance to giv our church music artistic importance: for let no one think that the church can put the artistic question on one side, Ther is no escape from art; art is only the best that man can do, and his second, third, fourth or fifth best are only worse efforts in the same direction, and in proportion as they fall short of the best the more plainly betray their artificiality. To refuse the best for the sake of something inferior of the same kind can never be a policy; it is rather an uncorrected bad habit, that can only be excused by ignorance; and ignorance on the question of music is every day becoming less excusable; and the growing interest and intelligence which all*

## PRINCIPLES OF HYMN-SINGING

*classes are now showing should force on religion a letter appreciation of her most potent ally. Music being the universal expression of the mysterious and supernatural, the best that man has ever attain d to, is capable of uniting in common devotion minds that are only separated by creeds, and it comforts our hope with a brighter promis of unity than any logic offers. And if we consider and ask ourselves what sort of music we should wish to hear on entering a church, we should surely, in describing our ideal, say first of all that it must be something different from what is heard elsewhere; that it should be a sacred music, devoted to its purpos, a music whose peace should still passion, whose dignity should streng' then our faith, whose unquestioned beauty should find a home in our hearts, to cheer us in life and death; a music worthy of the fair temples in which we meet and of the holy words of our liturgy; a music whose express sion of the mystery of things unseen never allow'd any trifling motiv to ruffle the sanctity of its reserve, what power for good such a music would hav!*

*Now such a music our church has got, and does not use; we are content to hav our hymn manuals stuff'd with the sort of music which, merging the distinction between sacred and profane, seems design d to make the*

## PRINCIPLES OF HYMN SINGING

*worldly man feel at home, rather than to reveal to him something of the life beyond his knowledge; compositions full of cheap emotional effects and bad experiments made to be cast aside, the works of the purveyors of marketable fashion, always pleased with themselves, and always to be derided by the succeeding generation.<sup>1</sup>*

ROBERT BRIDGES

<sup>1</sup> *Example is better than precept; and my own venture as a compiler of a hymn-book has made it possible for me to say much that otherwise I should not have said. In The Yattendon Hymnal, printed by Mr. Horace Hart at the Clarendon Press, Oxford, and to be had of Mr. Frowde [Milford], price 20s., will be found a hundred hymns with their music, chosen for a village choir. The music in this book will show what sort of a hymnal might be made on my principles, while the notes at the end of the volume will illustrate almost every point in this essay which requires illustration, besides many others. As I write, the last sheets of it are in the press, and the printer promises it in October [1899].*

# XXIII

ABOUT HYMNS

**FIRST PRINTED**

*Church Music Society*  
*'Occasional Papers', No. II.*

*EDITOR'S NOTE*

OWING to the kindness of Miss Eleanor Gregory, who sent me a copy of the following letter, I am able to add a further paper on Hymns written by R. B. twelve years later.

M. M. B.



## XXIII

### ABOUT HYMNS

*chilswellj*

*Near Oxford.*

*October 2, 1911.*

*IT is a difficult subject, and I do not see my way to deal with it. it seems to me that the clergy are the responsible people, if they say that the hymns (words and music) which keep me away from church draw others thither, and excite useful religious emotions, then they must take the responsibility wholly on themselves. I would not choose for them. All I can urge is that they should hav at least one service a week where people like myself can attend without being offended or moved to laughter. Any society for the improvement of church music, as it appears to me, can deal only with the worthier music—and it is for thatt reason that I hav been unable to interest myself in the work of a hymn' committee. Tor, judging by the number of approved hymns, its aim is to exclude the 'worst', and to distinguish the 'tolerable' things. But I suppose that the 'worst' are often just those very vulgar things that the*

## ABOUT HYMNS

*clergy find so useful I hav always advocated a division of hymns into two classes: (i) the worthiest (e.g. the old church hymns); (2) the rest; and I think that a church Musical society should not meddle with the second class. It seems a pity that editors of recent hymn' booh hav not seen their way to adopt such division. They would hav done better if they had divided their booh into two sections, but it is of course difficult to draw the line, and it might be more satisfactory to make three classes.*

*Now as to words merely, which is what you ask me to deal with. The words are in much the same con' fusion as the music. I coud only approach the subject of words from the musical point of view—and then one of the proper questions that would first arise would be the relation of words to music; and here, how far the artistic form of the hymn'tunes renders the tunes independent of the grammar of the words; e.g. whether the accented notes in the tune require always a corresponding accent in the words. I think that the intelligent hymn' singer is getting much too squeamish on this head. I do not find that an occasional disagreement between accent of words and of music offends me in a hymn. A fine tune is an unalterable artistic form, which pleases in itself*

## ABOUT HYMNS

*and for itself The notion of its giving way to the words is impossible. The words are better suited if they fit in with all the quantities and accents of the tune, but it is almost impossible and not necessary that they should. Their mood is what the tune must be true to; and the mood is the main thing, if the tune also incidentally reinforces important words or phrases, thatt is all the better, and where ther are refrains, or repetitions of words the tune should be design d for them; but the enormous power that the tune has of enforcing or even of creating a mood is the one invaluable thing of magnitude, which overrules every other consideration.*

*For this reason the tune is more important than the words, it shocks the clergy to tell them this, but they all concede the premisses, viz. (1) that the best words can be render d invalid or even ridiculous by bad music, and (2) that unworthy words can hav a worthy sense imparted to them by good music, whence of course it follows that (within reasonable limits) the tune is the more important, whatever hymn the Apostles sang after the Last supper, you cannot imagin a silly vulgar tune, but with a worthy solemn and pathetic tune almost any words. Vut aside archaeology, and try the experiment in your imagination.*

## ABOUT HYMNS

*Music being the most ideal and supramundane of all the arts, it cannot be equated item for item with poetry. A melody is a whole and the notes which are its units retain none of their meaning when isolated, in the words of hymns the different words have meanings—and no one should expect that the units of the one can be equated with the units of the other.*

*Again, to suppose that the melody is intended for the words (rather than for the mood of them) introduces the critical judgement of their correspondence. How do they fit? oh, very well, or pretty well, or not at all well—and since it is impossible that they should all fit very well, it is plainly wrong to raise an expectation which is bound to be often disappointed, and thus provoke a critical attitude incompatible with emotion, since it is only good tunes that will justify themselves when they do not fit well with the words, it may very likely be the prevalence of bad tunes—sentimental rubbish—which has made people squeamish about the false accenting of the words.*

*These considerations do not of course apply to chanting, the essence of which is that it should follow the speech-rhythm; the absurdity of our Anglican chanting is due to the chant being treated as a hymn.*

## ABOUT HYMNS

*Now far the general sense of the words of a hymn can be independent of their worthy verbal expression is another question.*

ROBERT BRIDGES

*[Extract from a private letter to Lady Mary Trefusis, published by permission.]*



# XXIV

## ENGLISH CHANTING

[History]

### EDITOR'S NOTE '

ROBERT BRIDGES wrote two articles on the history of English Chanting.

The first, *English Chanting*, was published in the *Musical Antiquary*, edited by G. E. P. Arkwright. O.U.P. April 1911.

The second was written for the *Prayer-book Dictionary* (1912) under the title *Anglican Chant*.

As these cover much of the same ground, only one is here reprinted: the first. Additional relevant matter from the second is given in notes either at foot of the page or at the end. M.M.B.



## XXIV

### ENGLISH CHANTING

[April 1911]

THERE *has never been so much Anglican chanting as at the present day: and altho the best is probably better than it has ever been, we hav also a very wide experience of the faults of bad chanting. "We ought to be able to use this experience to perfect our system.*

*when, at the Reformation, the English Psalms wer appointed to be sung, a problem was set, the solution of which was very difficult. Ther was no experience to guide the new practice; and the first experiments wer conducted half-heartedly, and entirely within the forms of the Latin tradition, which wer not immediatly recognized to be incompatible with an agreeable solution. "Nor was the new chanting practisd sufficiently to bring the essential difficulties of the problem into light, "while little success was attain d, the impediments remain d in obscurity. The difficulties coud not be discriminated: they wer not isolated, so that they could be separatly defined and theoretically stated and met in practice by the requisit musical devices which should obviate them. The historical record is of confusion, failur, and dissatisfaction.*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*The conditions are now very different. A form has been developed, which has given such satisfaction as to make the chanting of the Psalms almost universal; and the cup of our experience has long overflowed. The difficulties have not only been exposed, but the faulty execution of the naturally developed form—the essential fitness of which is hypothetically probable—has become so uniform that anybody can hear it anywhere, and can tabulate the errors, when we listen to the perfected chanting of our best cathedral choirs we can tell exactly where it is wrong. Some verses are convincingly right, and as beautiful as we could wish them: in others we hear words hurried over which should be dwelt on, or words which should be sung quickly are delayed: and, the commonest fault of all, unimportant syllables, which have no natural speech-accent, are strongly accented by the music, what we require is that the speech-accent of the words should be always preserved; and it is not. We can hear all this, and according to our sensibility we are pained by every infraction of speech-rhythm. The words are made nonsense; the exquisite beauty of the text is marred and disfigured. We hear all this, and can mark it all with a pencil in our books: indeed it is all printed in the choir books.*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*what is needed is a modification of the present system which shall get rid o all of these faults, and with our present experience it should be possible to formulate such a scheme.*

*I propose to write two essays on this subject in the present paper I wilgiv a short account of the history of the Anglican chant, in order that the natur of the problem which we hav inherited may be clearly seen; in the second I wil giv an account of the new system—or rather the modification of our present system—which, it is con' tended, wil supply our needs, and secure perfect speech' accent in our chanting. The perfecting of this scheme, and its most essential rhythmical devices are due to the enthusiasm and ingenuity and choral experience of Dr. Allen.*

### HISTORY

*when it was order'd in 1549 that the English Vsalms should be sung in church instead of the Latin, ther was no music to which they coud be sung save the Latin church'tones. These two things, the English words and the Latin music, wer incompatible. This had not been suspected.*

*Easy as it may now seem to recognize this incompatu bility, it is yet difficult to set it out in definit terms,*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*because the Latin chant (as I wil illustrate later) was in a state of change. The plaining chants had been harmonized, and had thus lost their elasticity; and even when they wer sung unisonally their rhythm must have been infected by the treatment that they had received' As it is impossible to imagin stages of uncertainty or to define at any given time the practical effect of a shifting aesthetic impression, it is not worth while to attempt an accurat pictur of the conditions, in the course of this paper one main point wil come out sufficiently. At pre' sent it may convince the reader to consider that, ifther had not been an inherent incompatibility, the two things would hav found their reconciliation: but they did not. And at any rate it is quite clear that the English vsalms coud not be sung freely to the old tones without special notation of the new words. The only tones which coud thus be used are those which hav but one essential note in mediation with a short cadence, as tones n and vill.f*

[ ' See Note at end of this essay, p. no. ]

f *The Mediation of the Latin chant was originally, I suppose, in exactly the same condition as the Cadence whh respect to penultimat accent: thatt is, in each case the final accented note had a 'banger', so that both Mediation and Cadence ended with an unaccented note: and this 'hanger' in the Media' tion came (as we see) to he the accented final of the ist Division of the Anglican chant, as the hanger in the Cadence came to be the accented final*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*Now Marbecke's book, which came out immediatly at this crisis, and was no doubt intended to exhibit a satisfactory reconciliation, notes the Canticles fully to seven tones, and orders the Vsalsms to be sung to the shortest of all the tones, VIII. I. B, which has only one note in mediation and two in cadence. Ther is no vestige nor record of any other book which notes the Vsalsms or Canticles for chanting; for we may neglect Day's book.*

*The conclusion is that Marbecke's canticles may possibly hav been generally used, and tho ther is no evidence that his book had a wide circulation, copies of his Canticles may hav been taken, and other chants may hav been noted in his manner by precentors. The Psalms, it would seem, can only hav been sung to the shorter tones, which offer little or no difficulty so far as mere syllabic adaptation is concern d. But, since at the Restoration ther was a tradition that in certain places (Salisbury for instance) the old Latin tones had been in regular use, it is possible that some diligent of the 2nd Division. But the 2nd, 4th, 5th and 8th Tones had abbreviated forms of their Mediation, in which the hanger was omitted. It is a matter on which I hav no authority to speak, but since in Marbecke's time the hanger in the Mediation of these chants seems to hav been omitted at pleasur in setting English words, it was no doubt consider d as unessential, tho' my use of thatt word demands explanation.*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*precentors had noted Psalms to the tones for their choirs, and had used them. The destruction of choirmusic of this date has apparently left no trace of anything of the kind. Any discovery of even a scrap of it would help the history immensely. But, so far as I know, there is nothing more to be said on the matter than what I have just stated.*

*But was there no new Anglican music for the Psalms? Both Tallis and Byrd included the Psalms of one day in their complete settings of the new English service, in these somewhat elaborated settings of special Psalms the verses are all given separately, and every syllable is noted for five separate voice parts, such compositions would not be expected to have any bearing on the practice of chanting; but it happens that the extreme simplicity of Tallis's work makes a very near approach to chanting. He uses, in fact, two straightforward settings of the first tone; and the effect of these when sung must have been very like slow chanting in strict time, when indeed they show the features of the Anglican chant.*

*Now the 'Christ church tune', which has been ascribed to Tallis, is a four-part setting of this same first tone, and it is probably enough a rewriting in four parts and chant form of Tallis's adaptation. Another tradition*

[ ' See Note at end, p. no, Exx. 4 and 5.]

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*ascribes it to Adrian Batten about fifty years later, and since the ascription to Tallis has no authority and is unsupported by the music, it is, I think, the better opinion that it is some one's following of his example. It has every title to be consider'd the earliest Anglican chant, and I giv it here: but I set it out in commonHime bars in modern fashion, with the nomenclatur of the sections and notes, in order that the reader may hav something to refer to as a type, it should of course be unbarrd.*

NO. I. Ch. Ch. tune.

1st Recit.	Mediation.	2nd Recit.	Cadence.
I	2 3 4	5	6 7 8 9 10

The musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The notation is divided into four sections: 1st Recit. (measures 1-4), Mediation. (measures 5-6), 2nd Recit. (measures 7-8), and Cadence. (measures 9-10). The notation includes a C.F. (Canto Fermata) marking at the beginning of the first section. The notes are mostly half notes and quarter notes, with some rests.

*This is a simple and, if used in moderation, a useful chant. But it is very dull; and if it be imagirid as the*

*'In speaking of the penultimat accent of the chant, which is strictly the accent on this penultimat note, I hau not thought it worth while to guard against a verbal misinterpretation, which might arise if the unaccented note, which the harmony generally intercalates between the penultimat and final of the original Latin form, be consider 'd as the penultimat note. The ter' minology disregards this note.*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*only resource of chanting it is intolerable. Ther is no one who would not prefer to hear the Vsalms read than to have them fetter'd always by this exasperating argumentativ monotony.*

*But Tallis did actually write one original chant, thatt is his well-known chant to the Athanasian creed. It is on three chords only, the tonic, subdominant, and dominant; a masterly invention exhausting the simplest primary resources, and of such effectiv beauty that the motive of its form has perhaps escaped observation. But when we consider that the difficulty of chanting lay in the 'pointing, and that Marbecke had met this by choosing the shortest tone for his Psalms {a chant, thatt is, with one note in mediation and two in cadence), we must see that Tallis was only more completely fulfilling the required conditions by offering a chant which moved only one note in each place, misjudgement was fully justify'd, for the simplicity of the chant brought it into use both for the Canticles and the Vsalms. It is, however, very like a church tone, and can hav had no part in the development of the Anglican chant, except that its final accent must hav been very influential in exhibiting the convenience of thatt form of cadence, which Tallis, it would seem, foresaw to be the practical solution.*



## ENGLISH CHANTING

*in later collections ther may be found Anglican chants in modern form ascribed to Tallis, Warrant, and perhaps other composers of thatt date: but no stickler for the antiquity of the Anglican chant has ever produced any authority for them. They must all of them be pious fabrications of antiquarian organists, and presumably of the nineteenth century. Their makers probably took a sequence of chords from the old composer and then bravely credited him with the adjusted compilation. Beside the Christ church tune (given above) and Tallis's Athanasian Creed (which was calYd the Canterbury tune) I know of no other prcRestoration chant save Dr. child's setting of the eighth tone, which was call'd the imperial tune. K is given below, No. 5.*

*when the Puritans drove the music out of the churches it would not seem, then, that any great activity in the department of psalm'chanting was interrupted. But when in 1660 the choirs return d to their places ther was some enthusiasm, and the singing of the canticles at least stirrd up the ingenuity of the organists, so that fifty or or sixty original chants suddenly made their appearance. This period, from 1660 to 1700 (and no doubt a little later), was one of activ' and fertile experiment. A*

*[' The musicians'... activity showi itself mainly in the composition*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*question may perhaps be askt about the chants that then first appear in the choit"books, whether some of them which hav no ascription may not be relics from the prey Restoration times. I hav myself seen nothing to make me think this probable; but the only actual evidence that I can offer is this, namely, that the books by Lowe and Clifford, which appear d immediatly on the Restoration to provide music for the choirs, hav, beside the tones, no other chants than the three already described. These are set in four parts for the canticles, and recommended for the Vsalms so soon as the singers shall be competent' The absence, in Clifford and Lowe, of appeal to docw mentary sources is very remarkable.*

*of Anthems and Services, and the metrical Vsalms soon began to divert attention from the beautiful prose. P.B.D. Anglican chant.]*

*[' Lowe, in 1661, has two unisonal chants for the Venite, viz.: the Ch. Ch. tune [Ex. 1] and the 8th Tone: then these again with Tallis's Quicunque, all in four parts, for the Te D. or Benedictus, with a direction that these last 'may serve for the Vsalms on festival Days when the Quiremen are wellskiirdin song. Yrom the prominence of the 'Ch, Ch. tune' in records of this date we may conclude that it had seen activ service.... Lowe brought out a 2nd ed. of his book in 1664, and in the same year a 2nd ed. of Clifford's anthem book was publisht. In both of these there are eleven Latin tones set without harmony to the fast verse of the Venite, also one for Vs. 136, which is thus noted by Clifford—the Vsalms is probably*

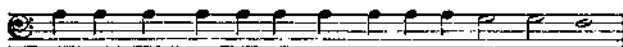
## ENGLISH CHANTING

*Before examining the new Restoration chants, which are the real beginning of Anglican chanting, I will return to some of the points which determined the new form. We are now in a position to understand their significance.*

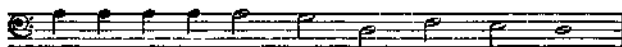
### THE CONDITION OF THE OLD LATIN PENULTIMAT ACCENT.

*One of the main differences in rhythmical scheme between the ancient plain-song chant and the Anglican, is that the Latin chant had a penultimat accent, whereas our modern English chant has a final accent. That this accent of the Latin chant was caused by the accent of the ecclesiastical Latin speech cannot be gainsaid: and it seems to me equally certain that the final accent of the English chant has the same natural relation to our English speech.*

*chosen because the refrain allow'd the noting of one verse (bad or good) to serve for all.*



O give thanks un- to the Lord, for he is gra- ci- ous



and his mer- cy en- dur- eth for ev- er.

*This specimen goes far to prove that there was no tradition from Marbecke. P.B.D. Anglican chant.]*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*Certainly it grew out of experiment and practice to universal acceptance, and that too in spite of the difficulty of supplanting an established tradition. But since the fitness of the final accent to our speech is sometimes denied, I will argue this matter out in a subsequent section: at present let us be satisfied with the historical fact. Assuming, then, that the Anglican solution is correct for English words, we can see that this form of the Latin chant's endings must have been one of the chief incompatibilities between the old Latin chant and the new English words.*

*But though this general statement is essential and convincing, the actual conditions were somewhat complicated and need more particular definition.*

*At the date of the Reformation the Latin chant was in a state of change, which may be described as degradation and confusion. As long as it had remained unharmonized its penultimate accent was light and elastic; but when it was harmonized, its two final notes in many of the chant endings became a full close, e.g.:—*

NO. 2. 8th Tone. Set by Josquin Despres.

C.F.

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*Now, if the unharmonized tones were suitable to the Latin chanting, this form can hardly have been suitable; and the Latin Psalms chanted to it must have suffered. But this does not concern us: we may neglect the Latin words, and consider the music.*

*It is plain that the dominant-tonic progression in the last two notes of this example is capable of being interpreted by a final accent. Moreover the last note is so strengthened by the logic of its harmonic preparation that the original penultimate accent of the chant, if it should be retained, must be enormously increased in force. We are in presence therefore of a sort of dilemma: for we cannot say whether the chant has a very strong penultimate accent, or a final accent: while if the chant were band in common-time we have an approximately equal accent in both places. The earliest Anglican chants appear to have inherited this ambiguity: and if it should be asked how far their composers were aware of this ambiguity (or may even have considered this ambiguity as a solution), we can deduce no certain answer from the conditions, because we do not know how familiar the singers were with the unharmonized plain-song. We can only guess from a study of their practice.*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*Here is Dr. child's version of the 8th tone:—*

### NO. 3. Imperial Tune.

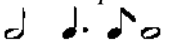


*Considering the canto fermo, and the ecclesiastical tradition, can we deny that the penultimat accent is here intended? Considering the harmony and the subsequent history of the chant, can we deny that it has a final accent?*

*The explanation of a matter which at first hopelessly puzzled me wil, I think, enable us to see the exact attitude of the Anglican chanters to their chanUending. Thru out thatt period of experiment (following 1660), when the vsalms can hav been little sung, it was the Canticles that demanded music, and the chants written for them wer generally set out for the first verse of the Venite. Now this verse, ending in the word salvation, has a penultimat accent, for salvation was accented in ordinary speech as a trisyllable, as we now say it. Ergo, one might at first think, since its accented second syllable was always set on the penultimat note of the old chant (the penultimat accent of the harmonized*

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*chant), the chant was intended to have a penultimat accent*

*But this word salvation was always set out as a word of four syllables, with a special note for the ti, in this or similar . This syllabizing was archaic, and its use, tho<sup>3</sup> traditional, needs explanation, it must hav had some convenience or special purpose: and, observe, the recognition of ti as a syllable restores the secondary obsolete accent on the final syllable of the word.*

*it must be clearly recognized that, tho salvation was spoken as a trisyllable with penultimat accent, it was not possible for them to set it as we now set all the polysyllables of the verscendings, namely, with their accent and its hangers (or pendant unaccented syllables) all on the final. The old syllabic notation was still very prevalent Therefor, since the va of salvation coud not come on the final, it must come on the old penultimat, which would hav suited the unisonal Gregorian, but did not suit the harmonized chant, whose penultimat note was now removed from the final by the harmony, and removed, observe, by almost exactly the same sort of spurious addition as came into the word salvation when its archaic ti was reckon d as a syllable. The two things,*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*the modernizing music and the archaizing speech, seem a perfect adaptation: the primary accent on the va takes the traditional chant accent, while the secondary accent on the last syllable, introduced by the insertion of the ti, satisfies the necessary but still indeterminat final accent of the chant which was introduced by the harmony. The ending was therefor halfway between Latin and Angli' can, and might be calVd a crossling, if a crossling could be the father of one of its parents.*

### NECESSITY AND FITNESS OF FINAL ACCENT.

*Let us now clear up the point of the suitability of the final accent of the chant to the English Psalms. it is of course absolutely required for all those verses of the Vsalms which end with an accented syllable: and these are in such number as to compel the final accent in more than half the verses, in the Vsalms the actual number of final accented syllables in the verse endings is 1,295, and when to these we add the par oxy tone endings whose penultimat is short, i.e. words like perish, prisons, other, shadow—which we shall see must be treated as finals—then more than 1,500 of the 2,508 endings require the final accent on any hypothesis except thatt of a return to unharmonized plains song.*



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*As ther is nowadays a deplorable failur to discriminate these short paroxy tones, it is necessary to devote a little special attention to them here, it is a perfectly simple distinction, and recognized by everybody in speaking, but for some reason neglected in our chanting; and this neglect is one of the reasons why our psalm'chanting sounds so stilted and affected and stupid. lor the chant'ing is made to alter the speech'values of the words.*

*"Let us consider, from the point of view of common sense and ordinary colloquial speech, the difference between long and short accented syllables. This distinction between long and short troubles people; they do not know what is meant by it. We hav not, like the Greeks and "Latins, tabulated an artificial distinction of our syllables into longs and shorts. Their rule was that every syllable must be one or the other, and that a short syllable was half the length of a long syllable; and they learn d to distinguish them at school. We prefer our natural habit of taking syllables as they are, and admit'ing all degrees of length. Let this be agreed—but it does not prevent some of our syllables from being extremely long, and others extremely short. We hav, so to speak, our freezing point and our boiling point, however we may subdivide the degrees between them. We hav syllables*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*so long that they may be treated as disyllables, and others so short as to be almost asyllabic.*

*Ordinary examples of long syllables are down, pdw'r, fife, increase, while the word amiability is so full of short syllables that a Frenchman cannot tongue them' Now accenting a short syllable does not lengthen it; the bil of amiability is not the longest of the five short syllables in thatt word: and a short accented syllable cannot be dwelt upon (thatt is, produced or lengthen d in time) without deforming the word; amiabeelity is not an English word, nor is eyverf (for ever) nor teyror (for terror) nor ba-ttle (for battle = bat'I). For practical purposes, and IT IS THE PRAO*

*' If any one needs the conviction of actual experiment let him tell the seconds on his watch while he says I'lAAuiy twenty times, and then mcense bfeathing morn the same number of times, pronouncing the consonants. He wilfind the difference about 2 to 1. If he suppose that this ratio may be due to the long syllables having more accents or stresses on them than the short ones hav, let him condescend to substitute Billy Billy Billy, six syllables with three stresses, for lability, and he wilfind the three billies the shorter.*

*f The word ever has won exceptional licence for two reasons. ~Eirst, its frequent presence as the last word in a musical movement, where its extent sion is unavoidable, has accustomed our ears to a conventional treatment of it. Secondly, the sense of the word being that of indefinit duration, any delay on it has a sort of propriety. These considerations do not affect chanting.*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

TICE WHICH DETERMINES THE THEORY, *a long syllable is one which cannot be spoken quickly or shortly without deformation of the word, that is mispronunciation; and a short syllable is one which cannot be dwelt on without mispronunciation.*

*Some syllables which are intermediat are not easily differentiated by such a rule, but the extremes are. It follows that a short accented syllable cannot take a long accented note in chanting without being deformed: and, if chanting is to express true speech-rhythm, it is necessary to forbid these short accented syllables to fill a whole bar of the chant, or even to occupy the time of a whole accented minim.*

*Tor this reason, these 'paroxytone pyrrhics' i.e. words like perish, vessel, other, when at the end of a verse must take the final accent of the chant, and range thus with the monosyllabic endings: there is no other possible treatment for them: and if their number be added to the sum of the final accents, then there is a large majority of verses which absolutely require a final accent in the chant.*

*whatever may be argued on the proper treatment of these short accented penultimates, the true appeal is of course to our own aesthetic sense of the syllabic value*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*of our words as we speak them: and as no one ever does pronounce these short accented syllables long in speaking, and would be consider d a lunatic if he did, it is really difficult to stoop to argue with him that he should not make them long in chanting, if any one attempt to defend such a practice he can only be con' founding accent with quantity: and if a man is in thatt condition, it is useless to try to understand anything that he says when he delivers himself on the subject of speech' rhythm: he certainly must not be allow'd to meddle with chanting, so I need say no more on this head.*

*By discriminating these short penultimats we hav made two classes of accented penultimats, and may pro' ceed to consider the long accented penultimats. These are words like scornful, season, prosper, righteous, joyful, scarceness, weary, preachers, etc. and I shall best anticipate the reader's thought if I state at once that any rule that we find for them wil cover also the longer endings: the grasshoppers, testimonies, & Co., wil follow the preachers.*

*Every one wil agree that if the penultimat accent in a chant is of any use in English, it must be suitable for these heavy accented penultimats and other heavy non' final accents with hangers.*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*I am about to argue, or rather, I think, to demonstrate, that it is not suitable even for these endings: and that the practice which has grown up of setting these long accented non final syllables to the final note of the chant, and their following unaccented syllables to the same note is correct*

*This is not to say that it is always well done, when it is done; or that it is easy for untrained choirs, or for persons who cannot pronounce well when reading aloud, to sing such endings gracefully' But as such performers usually make a mess of anything, their difficulties need not detain us.*

*One convincing illustration is better and more agreeable both to writer and reader than many arguments: and I think that I can offer one that is incontrovertible and final Look at Vur cell's practice in his verse anthems. How does he treat these words? lie is not chanting; thatt is he is not bound by an indispensable propriety to keep to the speech'accent. The music in a verscanthem*

*The difficulty of accentual against syllabic pointing is equally well known to those who teach choirs Latin music with Latin words. It must not be thought to be peculiar to Anglicans and Protestants. Some Latin' chanting choirs are recommended to adopt an inferior practice, because in' capable of the better. See A Grammar of Gregorian Music, by William Walsh, D.D., chap, v, §§ 10 seq., especially 13, p. 45.*

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*is at that stage of elaboration which permits a good deal of liberty in dealing with mere speech values: but it happens that Vurcell is scrupulous about them; and as he commanded extraordinary ingenuity and allows himself wide liberty, we may be sure that any bounds which he sets to his practice must be a very real obligation. How then does he treat these words? He always treats their accents as finals. That is, a word like righteousness has its first accented syllable on the bar accent, and the other unaccented syllables follow upon unaccented repetitions of the same note: or more correctly on the same bass. The rule is that the bass must not move. Take the volume of minor verse anthems and observe the words thus treated. The exceptions are merely at the full closes of musical movements, or obeying some peculiar musical propriety.*

*Quotation is not possible, and the full significance of Vurcell's practice can only be seen by examination of the music; but I will give one extract to show how far this treatment of the words is from being unsought or inexpressive. It is from the anthem, 'near me, O Lord, and that soon and shows a tail of two enclitics:—*

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Hide not thy face from me.



*Handel's 'comfort ye my people' shows the natural ease of this way of setting such words, it does nothing with them but what Vurcell had done, since Handel was a foreigner, he must have had to study very closely before he could treat the English language as well as he did: and it was fortunate for him that he had a native composer so careful and trustworthy to follow as Vurcell was. I have always supposed that he learned that part of his art from him. The recitatives in his oratorios are full of illustrations of this particular detail, and I do not know that they show any exceptions. The words in question are usually sung in the recitative with a suspension on the musical accent, and this is of course quite in rule, and many of our florid chants contain such suspensions.*

*The rule, then, is that the bass must not move harmonically on these words. Now between the penultimate accent and the final of a harmonized chant there is practically always harmonic movement of the bass. English*

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*words like joyful, habitation, scarceness, weary, preachers (which I take from Ps. 68), wil not stand this movement; and it was hearing this Vsalm sung to the eighth tone (given in Exx. 2 and 3), in which it is impossible for modern ears not to hear a full close on the re do, that first awaken d me to recognize the musical condition of these speech'units. I question d with myself what it was that made them sound so awkward and stupid, and I came to the conclusion which I havjust offer'd to the reader.*

*The reason why the correct Anglican method of chant'ing these words so often offends in practice is partly because of slovenly execution, the quantities being gener'ally alter d from true speech, and also because in other parts of the chant we hear words constantly wrested from their speech'accent to fit into the bars; and the musical accent being held stiff, the chant sounds like a syllabic hymn'tune, in which such terminals are alto'gether out of place.*

*We hav, then, at the present day these two first prin'ciples fixt for us to rule our chanting. lirst, that the chant has a final accent; second, that the final accent of the verse should (as an almost invariable rule) be taken on that accent. Now in 1660, when the composers wer*



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*experimenting in making chants, these principles wer not in existence: the first was not sufficiently recognized to exhibit the fitness of the second. It would therefor he of historical interest to discover, if we can, what rhythm the first experiments took: and as all the chants of thatt period which hav remain d in use hav been reduced to the modern common-time barring with final accent, it is necessary to investigate the original MS. it is not difficult to guess where we should look to find them: the convenience of the singers in choir determins that they must hav been scored where they would be all together, handy to turn to and impossible to be mislaid. These conditions point to the fly-leaves and covers of the service-books, and wherever the service-books that wer in use in choir at thatt date hav not been lost or mutilated by rebinding, there they should be found. I hav made no systematic search, but hav taken what opportunities offer d to me. Being at Exeter one Sunday I coud find nothing there; my friend Dr. Davis at Wells coud produce nothing; another friend who inquired at Hereford, and another at Durham wer unsuccessful, and to my great disappointment Canon nine Haycock, the precentor at Westminster, which should he the best field of all, coud send me nothing. But the old books hav been*

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*preserved at Oxford Cathedral, and the harvest that I reap'd there has been supplemented by the Vrecentor at Ely, who allows me to use the MS. which he sent to me: years ago at Chichester I was shown a prayer-book from the Canons' stalls, wherein the basses of the chants were noted; and adding to these the well-known MS. of twenty-one chants in the British Museum, and another of five in the Bodleian, and a most interesting set of six chants which appear'd in one edition only (1674) of vlayford's Brief Introduction, I have enumerated, I think, all my finds and failures. As it would be premature to draw full conclusions from the analysis of such imperfect material, I shall handle it lightly.*

### THE FIRST EXPERIMENTS IN RHYTHM.

*Taking the eighth tone, as it is seen in the C.F. of Josquin's chant {given above, No. 2 [p. 88]} as the type, it would seem that the Anglican form may have come out of this, making its new mediation by harmonizing, in two chords, the rising accented note of the old mediation, and treating the optional unaccented pendant as the new accented final. The cadence was similarly formed, as we have seen, by*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*making two chords on the old accented penultimat, and thus bringing the unaccented final into accent for the new final*

*But both fattens first tone (EX. 1) [p. 83] and Dr. child's eighth tone (EX. 3) [p. 90] make their mediation differently, by taking a note from the recitation and accenting it, thus leaving the accented note of the old mediation unaccented between two accents—and Tallis set the example for this in his vsalm, O do well.' in either case the form of three notes with their accents is the same, because the note borrow'd from the recitation has usurp'd the accent of the mediation, we should therefor expect to find that the earliest barring of the Anglican chants would mark these two accents, that is one on note 2, the other on note 8 of the chant, by setting bars before them: and we do find this.*

*Ther are two sets of chants in the Christ church books. The first has the chants unbarr'd—and we may disregard all unbarr'd chants as giving no information; the second set has its first five chants all scored thus (i giv No. 3):—*



## ENGLISH CHANTING

*and we may provisionally regard this as the 'vestigial' barring, due to the origin of the chant, and likely to remain on in writing after it had been lost in singing.*

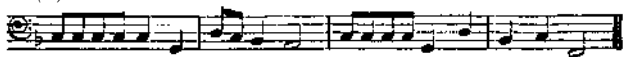
*The next two chants depart from this, and giv what I call the alia breve barring. The quotation wil show what I mean by thatt term, i.e. four notes to the bar, giving the chant accented finals with only two other accents, which is the most satisfactory rhythm that the Anglican chant has yet obtain d:—*



*The Ely MS. sets the Imperial tune thus and nine others.*

*The next three in the Christ church books return to form (a), but No. 10 has a lengthen d mediation. I giv the bass:—*

(c)



*and this symmetrical scheme, equalizing mediation and cadence, is immediately rivalYd by the advocat of the alia breve barring (chant 13):—*

W



## ENGLISH CHANTING

*This lengthening of the mediation, which may have been adopted for the sake of symmetry, is plainly procured by appropriating two notes of the recitation, and we have seen that it had already borrow'd one. it would naturally arise from the occurrence (as is not infrequent in these old chants) of a passing note or chord between the recitation and mediation; for such a passing note has a tendency to detach an accented note from the recitation, as we may sometimes hear in our modern chanting; e.g. (dotting note 6 for sake of illustration):—*



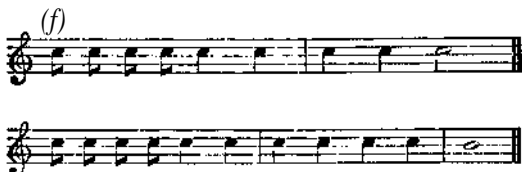
*In the five Bodleian chants the mediation keeps the old barring, but the cadence is alia breve. They are thus set out for the first verse of the Venite (and thus a double chant at Ely):—*



*All the twentyone chants in the British Museum MS. observe this same form, but they write a bar before the*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*final I giv Talk's Canterbury tune as an extreme example of Procrustean uniformity:—*



The *Chichester* book begins the chants with alia breve accet and then exhibits the vestigial penultimat, making a new symmetry, thus:—



The grand chant and one other in the *Ely* MS. hav this rhythm.

I hav reserved to the last the most original of all the experiments, which occurs in vlayford (1674). He there sets out one chant hy Dr. Blow, and five chants by Dr. Turner for the first verse of the venite, in the following form:—



## ENGLISH CHANTING

*On this system Dr. Turner's well-known second chant would appear in modern notation thus:—*

*Turner's rhythm.*



*The two notes borrowed from the first recitation make the mediation and cadence equal in length, and whether or no the alternative interpretation of a penultimate accent was considered possible, the introduction of the large triplet kills the accent on notes 2 and 8 of the common chant, since the accent on these notes is one of the greatest obstacles to free chanting, it may be that this invention had this particular purpose; and in the practical reform of our chanting we shall find it a useful device. As it comes to us with Turner's chants, we may distinguish it by his name.*

*The early double chants exhibit no rhythms different from the single chant, so that they may be neglected here as throwing no light on the development of form—and we have also neglected all merely capricious varieties—but it may be worth while to print a chant by one Bartholomew Isaac\* preserved in the Bodleian, which was*

*\*one of the Children of the Chapel Royal under Blow, 1674-7.*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*sung at Christ church, and may provisionally claim to be the first of its kind. The exact date, however, of all these early chants has yet to be determined. with a correction of the miswritten bass it is thus (a):—*

Mr. Bartholomew Isaac his Double Tunc  
(Bodl. MS. Mus. Sch. D. 217).



*I will give also another curiosity. It is a six-part double chant at Ely, in which the two halves are in the different competitive rhythms: the first half being in the alia breve form of (b), the second in the historic form of (a). It is ascribed to 'Mr. Yinch and Mr. Nalson; and if Mr. Tinch wrote the first half and Mr. Nalson the second, then it would seem from other chants that Mr. Nalson was subsequently converted. The treble is thus:—*



The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The top staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). It contains a melody with eighth and quarter notes, including a triplet of eighth notes. The bottom staff begins with a bass clef and contains a bass line with eighth and quarter notes, also including a triplet of eighth notes. The system concludes with a double bar line.

*implying that he held that the chant should move freely as of old, and that if it had any right to a bar it was in the historical place before the old penultimat accent, if it be askt how the common'time barring came in,*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*I believe that any musician who has had the patience to read this essay will anticipate what I am about to suggest, though it has never, perhaps, been said before. This commonHime barring appears to have been a compromise between the two opposed and competing theories. Those who regarded the tradition of the chant insisted on the historic (or vestigial) bars of example (a), that is bars before notes 2 and 8. Those, on the other hand, who were developing the chant in the spirit of the time, urged the alia breve barring of example (b), that is with bars before notes 4, 6 and 10. The practical inconvenience of this discrepancy in scoring the music was obviated by combining the two systems and writing all the bars in. Neither party can have been satisfy'd, but neither could complain. The result has been the stiffen'd practice which it is our business to amend.*

ROBERT BRIDGES

[NOTE

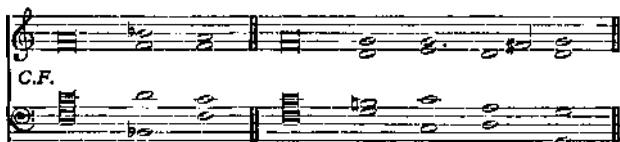
*from Anglican chant by R. B. Prayer'Book  
Dictionary, 1912.*

*Quite distinct from this old unisonal fast chanting, there was another practice, that of singing the Tones in vocal harmony; and this had become variously elaborated,*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*and may be divided into two kinds, according as (a) the chant form overruled the music, or (b) the music obliterated the chant and became more like a note under note motett than a chant* The following setting of Tone VIII by Josquin Despres<sup>1</sup> (died 1521) wil illustrate the former kind:

**Ex. I. 8th Tone. Set by Josquin Despres.**



*Now this chant differs from the old tradition by king in four voiceparts on a harmonic system that fixes and enforces accents and time values. The chanting is wholly alter'd in character, being slow and sw taind; and since the Recitation moved no faster than the rest of the chant it is somewhat stiff and tedious, when such settings wer used for special Vsalms or chants, it be came a custom that the Cantors should sing the alternat verses in unison, while the choir responded in their slower*

<sup>1</sup> *Ex. 1, reference lost. Ex. 2, from Bordes, with his barring: Anthol. des Maitres Rel.: Motets, 6g, where it is in notes of half value one tone lower. Ex. 3 is from Capes, Select, from Palestrina, p. 169. [Ex. 1 occurs in the text, p. 88, but is repeated here for the reader's convenience. M. M. B.]*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*harmony, which could only justify itself by elaboration. These Modulations, as they were call'd, quickly came to take liberties with the Canto fermo, and in Italy soon dispensed with it altogether, as in this later example by G. M. Nanino (d. 1603). It has no C.F. and the Cantor takes up his tone on cfc| after the chord of A maj.*

Ex. 2.



*The following is a Miserere by Vales trina, without C.F.:*

Ex. 3.



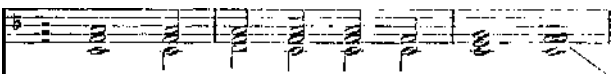
*As for the other manner (b) in which the chanUform came to be obscured and ultimately lost in the elaboration of the setting, Day's book, Certayne Notes, etc., which was publisht in i\$60, and intended to supply parUmusic for more accomplisht choirs, shows that this style of writing was much practised in England. It is the origin of our 'services', and has strictly no relation with the*

## ENGLISH CHANTING


*Anglican chant, nor would it be mention d here but for the fact that the settings which Barnard has preserved of Vsalsms by Tallis and Byrd happen to be in a midway condition between (a) and (b), and are of importance because they not only show a tendency to fall into what ultimately came to be the Anglican chant rhythm but even contain such chants. The following examples are taken from Bishop's scoring of Barnard, with the tran'scribers barring:*

Ex. 4.

O do well un to thy ser vant,



that I may live & keep thy word.



*The above is from Tallis's 2nd Vsalm; the whole is regular thru out and his first vsalm is the same chant {Tone 1} differently harmonized, and these are indistinguishable from class (a). The example below is from*

## ENGLISH CHANTING

*Byrd's setting of vs. 114. it has no C.F. The extract given is used as a double chant at Wells Cathedral to this Vpsalm.*

Ex. 5.

The sea saw that and fled; Jor dan was  
dri ven back. The moun-tains skip-ped like rams,  
and the lit-tle hills . . . like young sheep.

*These compositions, tho they seem pointing the way to our modern chant, hadprohahly no direct influence on its evolution, except in so far as that Ex. 4 may hav produced the Christ church Tune. They are new ex' periments in setting English psalms.]*

# XXV & XXVI

CHANTING

[Practice]

PSALMS NOTED IN SPEECH.RHYTHM





## EDITOR'S NOTE

ROBERT BRIDGES left three papers on the Practice of singing the psalms to Anglican chants, viz.—

1. Anglican Chanting. *Musical Antiquary* 1912.
2. Chanting. *Prayer-book Dictionary*, 1912.
3. Preface to a MS. Collection of *Psalms noted in Speech'Rhythm*.

The details are as follows:—

### 1.

In Jan. 1912 he wrote a second article for the *Musical Antiquary* called *Anglican Chanting*, to show how 'our chanting could be amended' so as 'to attain a perfect Speech'Rhythm'. The examples were given in a notation based on that used in most pointed Psalters.

### 2.

In the same year he contributed under *Chanting* an article to the *Prayer-book Dictionary*, covering similar ground. This account is fuller than that in the *Mus. Ant.*<sup>1</sup> besides giving general instructions for pointing the psalms and adapting chants, it deals with

[<sup>1</sup> But there is a passage on 'Refractory verses' which only appears in *Anglican Chanting*. This is given on pp. 132-4.]

## CHANTING

*Alia breve* rhythm, speech syllable values, the manner of singing, etc. This version has therefor been chosen to reprint here (No. xxv), but with two notable omissions—first, a paragraph on the final accent of the Anglican chant (this subject having already been treated in *English Chanting* xxiv): and secondly, a long section, demonstrating in detail his new system of noting the psalms, where the examples are given in musical notation, a note to each syllable.

To explain the reason for the latter omission I must digress, and I begin by quoting the Postscript to 1. R. B. writes: 'The conception of this system is Dr. Allen's, and it is made possible only by his inventions: but he is not responsible for my exposition of it, and the notation is chiefly my own.' This repeats what he says in *English Chanting* (see p. 79), but I give it here, because R. B. himself so constantly acknowledged his debt to Sir Hugh Allen. This musical friendship began long before these articles wer written, and Sir Hugh was a frequent guest at the Manor House during the years when R. B. was Precentor of the Yattendon choir: it was, I believe, at his invitation that my husband join'd the Committee for revising the pointing of the Psalter in 1916.

Eventually several Psalters wer publisht, pointed

## CHANTING

on the new lines then advocated. R. B. had no hand in them, but that he regarded them, or at least one of them, favorably is shown by this quotation from a letter (circ. 1927): 'I think the new psalter will be very useful: it is certainly on right lines, and far better than anything hitherto offer'd. It does not go as far as I contended for

Following on the work of the Committee, the New College choir, under Sir Hugh's direction, sang, at Evensong on January 29, 1918, in place of the ordinary Psalms for the day, 4 psalms from copies written by R. B. in musical notation (a note to each syllable). Encouraged, I think, by the convincing beauty of this performance, he went on to note 59 psalms. In the course of the work he improved his theory and his method of approximating to speech-rhythms; especially he came to emphasize the importance of the 'TWO UNITS OF TIME' (demonstrated by writing large and small minims), and on the consequent facility in reproducing fine differences of syllable length, all of which he explains in the *Preface* bound up with this collection of *Psalms noted in Speech-Rhythm*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The MS. of this (the only copy) is in my possession. Occasional marginal remarks, added at various dates, 1920 and later, show that Sir Hugh's advice was still being sought. M. M. B.

## CHANTING

### 3.

This digression has now brought us to his final method of noting psalms, and will, I hope, justify my decision to print the exposition of it given in this *Preface* 3, rather than that in either of the earlier treatises on the practice of Chanting—1 and 2.

The *Preface* is call'd *Explanation for interpreting the notation*: it must have been written in 1919 or rather later: it was evidently not intended to be published as it stands: tho' carefully written, half of it was only in pencil. But beyond the correction of punctuation and of some small obvious errors it is printed here without alteration. I illustrate it by a facsimile of one of his last 'noted' psalms: he wrote out 8 in **1929-30**.

There exist also rough notes of a digest of the *Preface*, which R. B. sent, with some examples of notation, to the late Noel Ponsonby, when organist of Ch. Ch. 1927-8. A few quotations from these will be found in footnotes to 3.

M. M. B.

XXV  
CHANTING

**FIRST PRINTED**  
*Prayershook Dictionary*  
*igi2*

# XXV

## CHANTING

[1912]

*THIS article deals with the theory and practice of singing the psalms to Anglican chants. Some preliminary remarks on the ultimate accent are necessary.*

[These are omitted, as the subject has already been fully considered in XXIV, see pp. 92-100. After the 'remarks/ the article continues thus:—]

*The Anglican single chant is a oneAine hymn rhythm (see below) and the double chant has close affinity with the metrical psalm'tune. Besides this it is also the fact that the chant is commonly sung as a hymn'tune with licence to crowd or extend refractory syllables, it will be convenient to divide our description of the practice artificially under two heads, according as the chant is treated as a hymn'tune or as a chant*

*Chant treated as hymn'tune.*

*if the chant be sung as a hymn'tune, the bar'accents and time of the music will be strictly observed, and will override the speech'accents where they do not coincide, and cannot be easily accommodated. Also the words that fall to the melody will be more important than those on*

## CHANTING

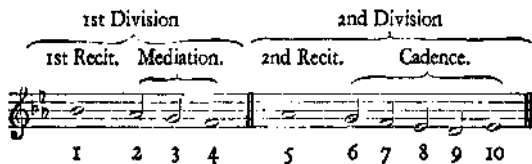
*the recitation'notes, for these wil tend to be hurried or delay'd in order to wrest the recitation note into time, if on the other hand the chant be sung as a chant, then the recitation wil be as important as the melody, strict time' values wil disappear, and interpretation of the melody wil be guided by the words. In either case the aim is to bring the accents of words and music into correspondence, and where the words happen to fall into the hymn'tune rhythm ther is practically no difference between the systems.*

*To sing an Anglican chant as a hymn'tune is very easy, and as the practice of chanting the vsalms was ex'tended to unskill'd choirs, this method naturally prevail'd, and was degraded so as to make it still easier. On the other hand, to subordinat the strong melody to the irregular rhythms of the prose vsalms is extremely difficult, and few choirs are skill'd enough to attain much proficiency. what is now [1912] esteem d the best chanting is a modification of the hymn'tune method; and tho<sup>3</sup> it wil appear that the freest chanting may be attain d by the use of time'fictions on thatt basis, yet for the sake of exposition it is best to keep to this artificial distinction. The chant wil be considered as single, a double chant being only the same rhythm repeated.*



## CHANTING

### EX. I.



*This being the scheme often notes, with their received* *Barr'd in*  
*groupmnes, the first question is how they should be* *common time.*  
*band. As a matter of fact the chant is usually band*  
*in common time, with equal alternate accents, thus—*

### EX.2.



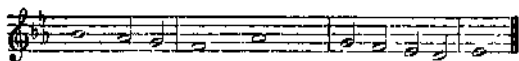
Praise him sun and moon; Praise him all ye stars and light.

*This is the worst way because it introduces the greatest possible number of primary musical accents, it is plainly only suitable where, as in the verse chosen, the words happen to be weighty syllables with corresponding alternate accents, in such a case it is right and identical with free chanting; but the cases are few. The psalms were versified in order to obtain such lines of regular length with regular accents corresponding with the accents of common tunes. The prose version has not got them; and the more fixed accents a chant has, the less adaptable is it to the text.*

## CHANTING

*A better way then wil be to reduce its accents by breve' time. barring it in alia breve time, with four notes instead of two in the bar; which givs the following rhythm-*

**Ex. 3.**



(a) (the) Lord is my strength And..defence of his a/nointed.

28.4

(b) Lord keep the city; T he.... wak/eth but in vain.

127. 2

*This is the oldfavourit sapphic rhythm of Node sury gentes, Herzliebster Jesu, Dykes' Abide with me, etc. iho I believe that musicians are now generally agreed that this alia breve barring is the better account of the rhythm it seems a matter of taste, and the prefer' ence unhesitatingly given to it depends on its aesthetic superiority, and on the convenience of having half of the fixt accents reduced to a secondary and shifting condition. They can be used or not as required. And the advantage is in practice very convincing. None the less is it true*

<sup>1</sup> My old friend Sir John Stainer accepted it without qualification, altho it is his hooks that hav done perhaps most to establish the commonHime practice, and he admitted to me that the system which he had adopted for the convenience of those who used his hooks was open to the reproach with which I charged it; and he approved of my contentions.

## CHANTING

*that most of our chants wer deliberately composed in alternat accent, and some of them are by their natur intractable; but they wil generally yield, and are often surprisingly improved by being forced out of their obstinat intentions.*

*The words in recitation should be sung at the same Manner of pace as the words in melody; the melody should hav a <sup>singing.</sup> slight tendency to be the quicker, as if the sense had escaped from bonds into freedom rather than the reverse; and this hastening is most necessary in the 2nd Div. (see Ex. 1) in the four'note bar, where it assists the primary accent to override the forceful intrusion of the dominant preparing the close when thatt occurs inopportunely on the 8th note of the chant, in chanting in alia breve time, if the accent on note 1 is required to assert itself against the secondary accent on note 2 (as in Ex. 3a) then it is necessary to hav some syllable of the first Recitation mark in the word-books as the commencement of thatt bar, as is now the common plan: but observe that the second recitation note is not in this condition, and that in the second division of the chant if the accent on note 6 is to hav its full value, then the only syllable necessary to mark is the one chosen to commence the bar on that note. The whole of the 2nd Recitation is imagined*

## CHANTING

*as an extension of the 2nd bar, and to force a word into time^accent within it contradicts the rhythm and produces a strong accent on the 8th note.*

*A choir that has only got so far as this may chant the Psalms with good effect. They have choice of two rhythms, and as either division can be in either rhythm, there are four variations, and with a hybrid 2nd division (made by commencing Div. 2 like Div. 1 in Ex. f), there are six. But in proportion as excellence is attained there will be dissatisfaction with the verses that do not fit into the system, whatever devices are sought to get rid of the false accents, and the crowding and extension of syllables, which are constantly injuring the sense in any form of duple rhythm, these will all fall under the next head, i.e. the practice of treating the chant as a chant.*

*Chant treated as a chant.* The logical need is for devices which will make the *chanUrhythm* give way to the words, without destroying the rhythmical unity or the harmonic structure. It must be clearly perceived that what we are now engaged in, is to adapt the values and accents of the musical notes to the *fixt*, predetermine values and accents of the words; so that the words will determine the *note* values and accents, not vice versa. The difficulty is to exhibit the

## CHANTING

*speech'rhythm to the eye intelligibly in common terms of musical notation: the musical notation can only give the corresponding types of musical rhythm, the free interpretation of which wil allow the syllables of the prose to keep their true natural speech'rhythm, with observation of accent and quantity.*

*I will take these devices in order of simplicity as a precentor might teach them.*

*The first thing to do is to shorten the recitation note when required, as:—*

Ex. 4.

(a)

But God hath heard me. 66, 17.

Detailed description: This musical example is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp, F#) and 4/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first measure contains a half note G4. The second measure contains a half note A4. The third measure contains a half note B4. The fourth measure contains a half note G4. The lyrics 'But God hath heard me.' are written below the staff, aligned with the notes. The number '66, 17.' is at the end of the line.

(b)

Do well O Lord. 125, 4.

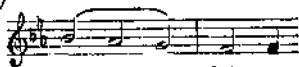
Detailed description: This musical example is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp, F#) and 4/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first measure contains a half note G4. The second measure contains a half note A4. The third measure contains a half note B4. The fourth measure contains a half note G4. The lyrics 'Do well O Lord.' are written below the staff, aligned with the notes. The number '125, 4.' is at the end of the line.

*When such a shorten d recitation^note is unaccented and follow'd by an accent, the Mediation falls into the rhythm of Ex. 2. But when it is accented it wil cause a triplet, thus:—*

## CHANTING

Ex. 5.

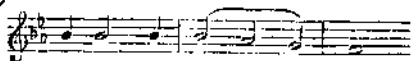
(a)



Haste thee to help me. 38, 22.

and the full recitation may be thus concluded:—

(b)



The fool hath said in his heart. 14, 1.

[The writer then shews how, by devices, the chant/rhythm can be accommodated to the words: this section is omitted, as the Editor's Note has explain'd, in favour of a later exposition (see p. 137). Some overlapping between the 2 versions was unavoidable. After detailing the devices, the article proceeds as follows:—]

Type of  
chant neeiei

if the proper speech'accent be known to the singers then very simple indications would suffice in the word' books; and the Vsaltns thus pointed could be sung to any simple chant . . . Any chant wil fulfil the required conditions if it can be taken not only in common time but also in the following rhythm, to exhibit which I wil note Morningtoris well-known chant in Eb. The original is somewhat offensively maud'lin, but it wil be seen that without its passing notes and with its varied rhythms it is beautiful The common' time form of course remains the constant basis—

## CHANTING

### Ex. 4.



*Any chant that can be taken in the above rhythm will submit to all the various treatments which Dr. Aliens system imposes; to modern ears the triplet may be trusted even to override the common suspended eighth on the eighth note, florid chants will not generally yield to speech' rhythms, most of them would have to be renounced; or if they are kept they must have their particular psalms specially noted for them; and it is not too much to ask that a peculiar chant should have a special setting. Some peculiarities of course give peculiar opportunities, but chanting that does not regard speech accent will never stand in competition against a system which observes it, when once its rich and incomparable beauty has been revealed.*

*After the bad practice which has so long obtained, and is inculcated in all the church Psalters, attention must be called to the importance of observing the actual relative duration or 'quantities of the syllables. Righteousness*

*Speech  
syllable\*  
values.*

## CHANTING

*and enemies, for example are not equivalent because they are both accented in the first syllable; nor are weary and heavy alike because written with the same vowels. Our pedantic and wrong spelling is a real obstacle: a Vsalter printed in phonetics would automatically cure our chanting of its worst faults. Accented syllables, whether long or short, should always have their natural speech quantities respected, but the SHORT ARE MUCH MORE SENSITIVE THAN THE LONG. Consider and perish are not English words, and no one would sing their accented syllables long unless he were taught to do so. On the other hand short unaccented syllables will often fill long unaccented places without distortion, and their extension is of great use, because it is a ready means of weakening an impending accent by syncopation. In any group of notes, even in the common 4 time bars, the notes should be mutually accommodating in their relative length values to suit the words that they carry. Nothing is worse in chanting than strict time.*

**[Refractory Verses.** *There are two kinds of verses in the English psalms which no system of pointing can deal with quite satisfactorily.*

*The first class is when the words are insufficient to fill the places of the music, and some sections are so short that unless the chant be re'*



## CHANTING

*duced in length ther is no solution hut to spread the syllables out over the notes in the least offensiv way. But, tho' I do not feel theoretically concerned with this incompatibility—for my undertaking is to make the music go to the words, and thatt implies the presence of words, whereas their insufficiency is an absence of them,—yet this is apractical difficulty, and I shall he expected to show how these verses would he taken in this new system.*

*In a good many of these verses I would shift the colon—e.g. in 'But let the righteous rather smite me friendly: and reprove me' I should put the colon at rather: and in<sup>1</sup> Our feet shall stand in thy gates: O Jerusalem' I should shift it to follow stand. But ther are other verses which wil not admit of this heroic resource. "For such verses I would point out that this new system allows all the minims to he read as crotchets, and also that the fast three notes of either division can he sung without accent: and I should propose that in psalms where such verses giv trouhle, a chant should be used which allow'd these three notes to he sung as a grace to the fast accent (viz. note 4 or 8). It wil he seen in Vs. cxxvi, 2, 4, 6 how this is possible, and the effect there seems to me satisfactory. This difficulty is therefor met as well as could be hoped.*

*If ecclesiastic authority forbid shifting the colon in the words, it should be sufficient to imagin that it is not shifted in the words hut in the music. It can remain in its old place in the word-books.*

*For the second class of refractory verses ther is no cure, hut they are fortunately rare. It is where the translation makes had sense when it is read, and consequently cannot make good sense when sung. Ex' amples are 'Save me from all them that persecute me and deliver me Here the conjunction, which should connect save and deliver,*

## CHANTING

*connects persecute and deliver. Again 'How thou hast driven out the heathen with thine hand and planted them in: how thou hast destroy'd the nations and cast them out Here the confusion of the pronouns before in and out is irremediable. Such faults of composition do not show in the old way of chanting where grammar and sense are so frequently distorted; but they come out very plainly where all the other verses have their meaning expressed by the music.*

*Anglican chanting, Mus. Ant., . 82 and p. 86]*

*Choir and  
congregation.*

*We have considered only how our English Versalms can be best chanted to our national music, and no precentor who has ever instructed a choir in good chanting would suppose it possible for a congregation to join in such singing. But the nearer the approach that the chanting makes to speech-rhythm, the easier is it for a congregation to follow; indeed absolutely good chanting would carry all the hearers with it, so that they would almost think that they were themselves singing. No one can sing the Versalms who does not know them by heart; all he can be expected to do is to follow; and the better the singing the nearer he will attend. Congregational singing of the Canticles is possible, and should be assured before the versalms are attempted. But if it is desired that everyone should sing the Versalms, then nicety must be relinquish'd, and all the musician can do is to play loudly on the organ. The old plainchant is more suitable than Anglican chants*

## CHANTING

*for congregational singing, but they are not generally popular nor likely to become so. Every musician would encourage congregational singing of hymns, but even that is rare; and practice shows that it is only well-known tunes that are heartily sung. That is why the Metrical Psalter superseded chanting; and it is singing the chant as a hymn-tune that has won its present popularity, where congregational singing is the self-indulgence of a minority it should not be encouraged in the Psalms, for their extreme beauty and profound devotional effect are thus wantonly sacrificed, it may be supposed that the present use, distressing as it is to those who consider either music or devotion, has been arrived at thru some kind of popular evolution, where it satisfies, it will probably continue; where it does not, the instructions in this article may help to amend it.*



# XXVI

PREFACE TO  
PSALMS NOTED IN SPEECH RHYTHM  
ILLUSTRATED BY ONE PSALM

*Now first printed  
from MS.*

## EDITOR'S NOTE

THE reader is reminded that the following *Preface* should be taken in conjunction with the last article (*Chanting*), and may be read at the point where the account of the 'devices' was omitted: see p. 130.

A few preliminary remarks are perhaps needed.

The aim of the new system was to bring freedom and flexibility into the old Anglican chanting, which was too rigid and definite. The ordinary division of time into & lackt the elasticity essential to the imitation of free speech movement: a greater variety of time values was needed. Hence arose the idea of the 2 units of time. Taking the usual minim and its subdivisions as the first unit, a second smaller unit was introduced, represented by the short minim, used in triplets. This, with the help of its subdivisions, gives a new series of time values, and thus a subtlety of rhythm is obtained, which the division of the semi breve into mere halves and quarters could never give.

This method of pointing the Psalms is considered by Sir Hugh Allen to be rather elaborate and dependent for success on the intelligence of the user. He holds, however, that it is not only practicable, but is in itself an attractive and engrossing pursuit.

M.

M.

B.

# XXVI

## PREFACE

### *To MS. Collection of Psalms Noted in Speech'Rhythm*

#### EXPLANATION FOR INTERPRETING THE NOTATION

§ i. Two *units of time*. Anglican chants are com'  
monly written in duple time with two minims to the bar.  
This arose accidentally being no musicians intention—  
as is explain d in my paper in the Musical Anti'  
quary, April, 1911' rhe chant to vs. I below is thus  
printed:

Praise him sun and moon Praise him all ye stars & light.

*and would be thus sung to such words as are here given,  
becoz they are heavy syllables with alternat accent: and  
these large or full minims are one of the two  
units.f*

[ ' See p. log.]

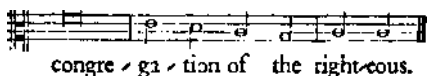
f This may pass, altho in good rhythmic chanting the words sun and  
might be a little quicker than stars and.

## PREFACE TO MS. COLLECTION OF

*The second unit is a smaller minim which is used freely in all good chanting, whether a triplet be sung in the place of two full notes as to such syllabic rhythm as*



*or whether a phrase of four syllables without an accent on the third occurs in the cadence, as is very frequent. In such cases the phrase is sung in 'alia breve' time, i.e. with four minims to the bar thus, as in Vs. i, v. 6—*



*and in order to assert this rhythm and avoid the accent on the 3rd syllable of the phrase, the minims are taken rather quicker than in the duple time, and are in fact of exactly the same length as the minims of the triplet (givn above); so that if the phrase be sung to a metro' nome set for semibreves of the duple time, its beat wil fall on the first and fourth notes of such a phrase. This smaller minim is the second of the two units, and in the notation these two kinds of minim, larger and smaller, are distinguish'd by being written of different sizes in correspondence with their values\**

\* [This device of 2 units is of extreme delicacy: for not only are the 2 minims of different length, hut all the lesser components in their groups are



## PSALMS NOTED IN SPEECH'RHYTHM

§ 2. *Varieties of musicaUtime rhythms, in the second paper Mus. Ant. Jan. 1912 it is shown that the duple' time chant can be sung in all rhythms:' and these various forms should be familiar since they are all required for proper interpretation of the varying speech rhythms in the words of the psalms. Besides the common duple form given above, ther are*

B. *the triplet form:—*



*which can use syncopation in cadence, thus:—†*



C. *the quadruplet form:—*



*respectivly of different values. These delicti differences are essential to the good interpretation ojspeech'rhythm, and the delicacy is so great that it would seem something more elaborat than one can expect singers to observe: yet it offers no difficulty to singers. Letter to N. P.]*

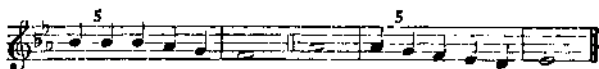
*\* The details wil be condensed in the following explanation: but see also the next footnote.*

*f This syncopation {and the syncopation of the recitation note also) was objected to by the committee of organists and in deference to their practical opinion I have avoided writing it in my noted psalms.*

PREFACE TO MS. COLLECTION OF  
or thus:—



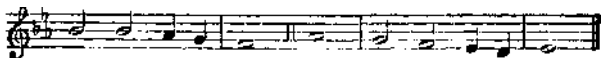
D. the five to a bar rhythm:—



which can also displace the 4'bar in cadence:—



E. and the true § time, which was adopted at one period by  
Dr. Turner:—

III



which again may varyjn the cadence.

Examples of all these variants wil be found in the  
noting and they are thusfyu/d:—

- A. The duple time is assumed as basis and is written  
in large minims.
- B. The triplet is written in small minims and is  
bracketed thus .
- C. The bar of four minims alia breve is written in  
small minims preceded by a 4 to warn the reader.
- D. The bar of 5 notes is written in crotchets preceded  
by a 5 above the line. N.B. The crotchets are not  
bracketed under a 5 thus  which would mean

## PSALMS NOTED IN SPEECH'RHYTHM

*that the five crotchets take the place of two large minims (if this should ever be intended it would be thus marled) but the crotchets have their full value, so that the metronome, if set for the full duple semibreve, would strike on the first and fifth crotchets, as it strikes on the first and fourth minims of the alia breve time.*

- E. *The bar of 3 full minims, i.e. f, is warnd by a Roman III preceding it, and its 5 minims may be represented by any complement of minims and crotchets.*

*in addition to these figurings some bars will be found mark'd by a Roman 1. This always indicates a bar {i.e. of one large minim), which is due to colliding accents in the words, and it is just as easy and agreeable in music as it is in speech'*

*Thus the Roman numerals always denote large minims, of the Arabic numerals, j? and 4 denote small minims; 5 denotes crotchets (of the large minim).*

<sup>'</sup> *[The bars always mark the accent: i.e., the first note following the bar is always accented. The fast note of a figur being always in that place is always accented and there will be no further accent until the notes corresponding to the figur are closed by another bar. Letter to N. P.]*

## PREFACE TO MS. COLLECTION OF

*Tho thefigurd notation was tested by the metronome, and may therefor in cases of doubt be referrd to the metronome, it is not intended that it should be sung strictly to it, any more than other music should be. It is only necessary that, e.g. where a 3 or a 5 is written, the singers should know that they are singing 3 or 5 with one accord, interpret it as they wil: and this freedom of interpretation—sometimes taken advantage of by writing 'Easy' over a bar (which always means that if it be sung in strict time the words will be too hurried)—makes it possible to write bars made up of notes the exact values of which are, as they stand, indeterminat. if these anoma' bus bars offer d any difficulty it must be confessed that the whole notation is at sixes and sevens, and I would therefor hav shrunk from writing them, but for the assurance of Dr. Aliens experience that they offer no inswperable difficulty, but are truly the most convenient forms in which to write values that are universally used in all easy chanting: these anomalous bars are, I think, only of two forms, and both of them easings of duple rhythm: one is the bar of a large and small minim as in verse 1 of vs. I: I way of \ sinners.*



way of sinners.

## PSALMS NOTED IN SPEECH RHYTHM

*it only means that 'of' is a lighter syllable than 'way' and must be lightly pass'd over without apparently losing bar length: some choirs wil do this without any loss of metronome time and others with some imperceptible loss.*

*The other irregularity is the substitution of a bar com'posed of a minim and crotchet in place of a full duple bar. This generally means that the conditions which gave the large and small minim (of the last example) are extreme and that the bar is perceptibly shorten d. of course if the music has fallen into a triple rhythm it wil be in order; in other places it is not so simple. A good example is v. 4 of vs. xviii, where in 'The pains of Hell came about me' 'pains of (written with a full minim and a crotchet) is follow d by a bar of a single large minim, which is follow'd by a bar of four small minims. I think these indications are very easy to seize and inter'pret in singing, and that knowing the number of fractions of a second which fill each syllable is of no use in practice.*


## PSALM XCI

### NOTED IN SPEECH RHYTHM

At the end of his copy of Ps. 91, in *Psalms noted in Speech'Rhythm*, R. B. wrote as follows:

*This is a very difficult psalm: the 'pp.' represents a heavenly voice in choir, interrupted by the ejaculation at v. g, and mixing with the psalmist at the end.*

[The following is an uncorrected reproduction of the original. Please note that—

in verse i. Roman I I I omitted, owing to the | time signature.  
„ „ 3. bars 1 & 3 n } n i m s in MS., tho' some look like  
„ „ 5. „ 7 alto D # | crotchets in reduced facsimile.  
„ „ 5. „ 8 tenor on 'by' should be crotchets, not quavers.  
„ „ 10 „ 3 } dots were erased in MS.  
„ „ 15. read  over 'I wil de ' and 'bring him to'.]

XCI

$\text{♩} = 60$

Vs. 4.

*1<sup>st</sup> Verse* *Simplex* *Allegro*

1. WHOSE dwelling under the deepening of the most High.

shall as birds under the shadow of the Almighty

*2<sup>nd</sup> Verse*

I will say unto the Lord, I have put my hope in my Redeemer

God - the Lord. *Allegro* *pp.*

$\text{♩} = 50$  *piano sempre.* (= "leimer voice")

For he shall de-liver thee from the grasp of the hunter

and from the noisome pestilence of the shed do-

stand thou under his wings, or thou shalt be safe under his feathers

thy faithful soul shall not be thy shield, but thy brother.



3

*Andantino*

Then shall not be a-fraid for any terror by night

nor for the arrow that flyeth by day

6 For the pestilence that walketh in darkness

For the sword that de-stroyeth in the noonday

*prof. 60. in var 2.*

9 For thou Lord art my hope Thine hand hath been my help and defence my life

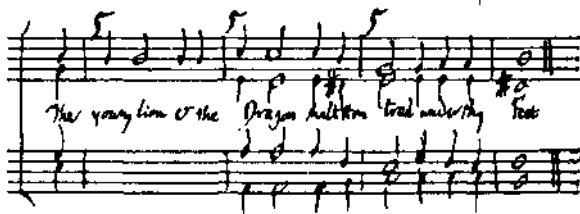
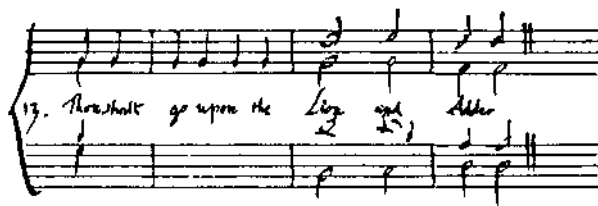
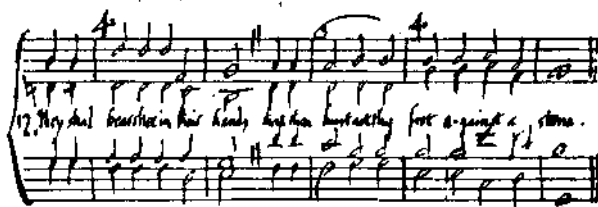
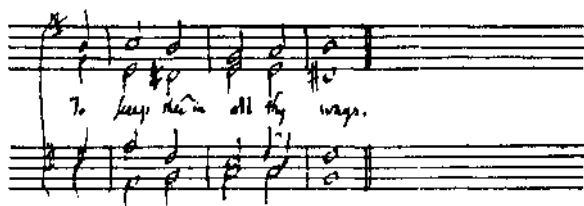
*return to piano & so*

10 There did no evil happen unto me

Neither shall any plague come nigh by dwelling

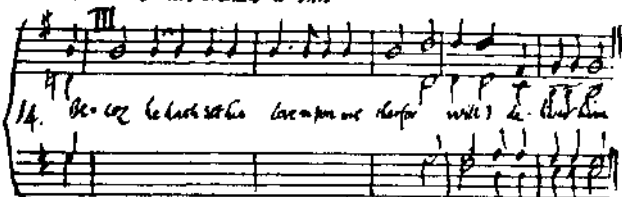
**III**

11. For he shall give his angels charge over thee.

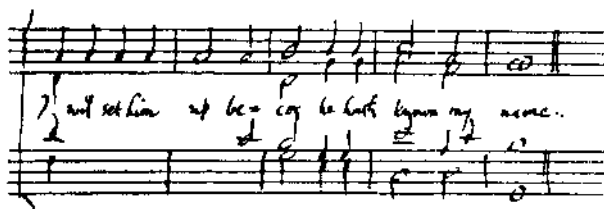


*louder & accelerating to end*

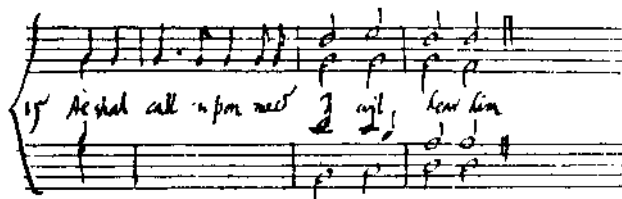
III



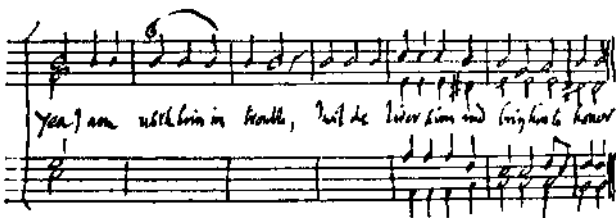
14. Be-cause he hath set his love upon me therefore will I be-cause him



and set him up be-cause he hath known my name.



15. He shall call upon me, I will hear him



Yea, I am with him in trouble, but he will save him and bring him to honor

16 we long for with relief

I know him my self - I am



## POSTSCRIPT

AFTER the last revise of these papers on 'Chanting' had been sent to the Press, the lost 'digest' of the *Explanation for interpreting the notation* (xxvi), mention'd on p. 120, was unexpectedly found. From this I now quote the following passage, which was not given in the rough notes. M. M. B.

THE charm of chanting lies greatly in the monotonous effect of the iteration of a short form. It is undesirable therefor to disturb the regular recurrence of it. And it is very important to remember that the more inflexible the musical form is, the more it covers and obscures the words, and that the same relaxation of the chant which enables it, by accommodated expression, to do justice to the beautiful passages, wil exhibit the unworthiness of the poor and bad places: e.g.: already even in my setting, 'I wil offer bullocks and goats' is ridiculous. My opinion is that my freedom with the form is about at the balance that best expresses the sense and exhibits the poetry without losing the monotony; but that nothing, not even absolute regularity of the music, can save the old Jewish jahveAdeas from disrespect; also that if they are maintain d, even in rigid chanting, their incompatibility

## POSTSCRIPT

*with modern life wil drive the psalms out of religious use. if the psalms are to be maintain d in use, they must be expurgated. My versions of . . . [Nos. omitted; probably Pss. 27, 28, and 66, were intended, as copies of these accompanied the Explanations. M. M. B.] are eX' amples of the sort of treatment I should wish.*

*Note also that the more melodious our melodious Knglu can chants are, the more liberty they wil allow in hand' ling, without losing the characteristics, the repetition of which givs the monotony.*

*The free handling of melody is a poetic beauty, and a source of new romantic beauties—not mere musical grammar of convenience and necessity.*

**[R. B.]**





*Bridges : Collected Essays XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI*









